

FOOD & WINE

HOW
TO

HOLIDAY

YOU HAVE
PARTIES

WE HAVE
RECIPES



DECEMBER 2019

CHOCOLATE-AND-
CITRUS CAKE
WITH PISTACHIO
PRALINE P. 122



The Holiday Issue

Roasted Citrus
with Crunchy
Three-Seed Brittle
(recipe p. 64)

SPECIAL FEATURE

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How We (Actually) Holiday

We asked our editors to share their favorite ways to celebrate the season with food and drink. The result? This collection of crowd-pleasing comfort food, including our favorite retro appetizers (p. 100); easy, festive mains (p. 106); an Italian Christmas menu with a showstopping cassata (p. 118); and cookies with the sweetest backstory (p. 114).

DECEMBER RECIPES

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KEY:

- FAST
- VEGETARIAN
- STAFF FAVORITE

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STAFF-FAVORITE PAIRING

PAN-ROASTED LOBSTER WITH CHIVE BEURRE BLANC

with racy, citrusy Albariño:
2018 Eighty Four Wines
Napa Valley Carneros



2018 DOMÄNE WACHAU TERRASSEN GRÜNER VELT LINER FEDERSPIEL (\$18)

Even in the warmest year that Austria's Wachau has seen since 1873, this lightly peppery white has plenty of fresh zest coupled with ripe melon fruit. Buy a case, because it's a perfect holiday party pour.



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STAFF-FAVORITE PAIRING

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What Ray's Pouring Now

Executive Wine Editor

Ray Isle's favorite things to drink this month

2015 TRIENNES SAINT AUGUSTE (\$19)

Slow-roast a pork shoulder and open a bottle of this juicy Cabernet-Syrah blend. The work of two Burgundy superstars (Domaine Dujac's Jacques Seysses and Domaine de la Romanée-Conti's Aubert de Villaine) who jointly invested in a Provence property, it's a bargain.

2016 ADELAIDA SIGNATURE VIKING ESTATE VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON (\$100)

Surely someone you know deserves an expensive (and terrific) bottle of red? Winemaker Jeremy Weintraub's impressive estate Cabernet is full of intense black currant fruit—lusciously rich, elegant, and balanced.

ILLUSTRATION: WINSLOW TAFT



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CORRECTIONS

In the November issue, we incorrectly referred to Alecia Moore's chef, who co-created the recipes for "A Very Pink Thanksgiving," as Robbie Graham-Wise. His name is Robbie Grantham-Wise.

The cover for our November issue was shot by Marcus Nilsson; for the cover and food-only photos in "A Very Pink Thanksgiving," the food stylist was Rebecca Jurkovich and the prop stylist was Angharad Bailey. We credited the team incorrectly and regret the error.



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Quail with Sherry-Mushroom Gravy

ACTIVE 55 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 55 MIN

SERVES 6

Smothering is an old-school stewing technique that keeps pork roasts, game, and chicken extra juicy. This version, a riff on my mother-in-law Faye Price's recipe, features a light roux for a gravy that won't overwhelm the delicate flavor of the quail.

2/3 cup all-purpose flour (about 2 1/8 oz.), divided
1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
1/2 tsp. black pepper
6 (3 1/2-oz.) semi-boneless quail (such as Manchester Farms) or bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs, patted dry
1/2 cup plus 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter (5 oz.), divided
1/2 lb. fresh wild mushrooms, sliced
2 cups chicken broth
1/2 cup dry sherry
 Cooked long-grain rice, for serving
 Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley and lemon zest, for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Stir together 1/2 cup flour, salt, and pepper in a shallow dish. Working with 1 quail at a time, dredge in flour mixture, shaking off excess, and transfer to a baking sheet, placing quail in a single layer. Set aside.

2. Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large skillet over medium-high; arrange mushrooms in a single layer, and cook until bottoms are lightly browned, about 4 minutes. Stir and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned all over, about 5 minutes. Transfer mushrooms to a bowl, and set aside.

3. Return skillet to heat over medium-high. Melt remaining 1/2 cup butter in skillet. Add 3 quail. Cook, swirling skillet occasionally, until quail are lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes per side. Transfer to a 2-quart baking dish. Repeat with remaining 3 quail.

4. Add remaining 1/2 cup flour to drippings in skillet. Cook over medium-high, whisking constantly, 2 minutes. Gradually whisk in chicken broth and sherry, and return to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium, and whisk until gravy is thickened, about 2 minutes. Stir in mushrooms. Pour gravy over quail, cover dish with aluminum foil, and bake in preheated oven until quail are cooked through and tender, about 1 hour. Divide rice among bowls; top each with 1 quail. Season gravy with salt to taste, and spoon over quail; garnish with parsley and lemon zest. —HUNTER LEWIS

WINE: Herbel, earthy Chardonnay 2014 Olga Polkoff Lee Pictures

How We Holiday

WHAT IS LOVE IN THE MONTH OF DECEMBER? How about a bowl of perfectly supremed Ruby Red grapefruit chilling in the refrigerator for breakfast? Or fat and flaky biscuits, warm and shiny with melted butter? Sometimes love is the unapologetically retro platters of sausage balls, or cheese balls, or almond snowballs dusted with powdered sugar on the kitchen counter. Or it's the bleeding, rare slices of smoked beef tenderloin with horseradish crème fraîche. It most certainly is guinea hen braising in a bath of Dijon mustard, white wine, and country ham-flavored stock with a pot of wild rice on the back burner ready to report for sopping duty. Love is a nightly helping of oysters, morale-boosting cook's snacks slurped over the sink, plus one proper shrimp cocktail with pink tails arched and fanned around a bowl of fancy cocktail sauce like two dozen synchronized swimmers. It's a slab of coconut cake and letterpress cookies for later. And Calvados. There's plenty to go around.

This is how the next month unspools at my kitchen island, where cooking becomes a way we celebrate the holidays and our love for one another, with recipes cooked faithfully, and shared joyfully, through the years.

How do you celebrate the holidays? That's the call we put out to staff and friends of *Food & Wine* at the beginning of 2019, and the answers could have filled a cookbook. We winnowed them down to create this issue, a dinner party playbook of sorts for the feasting season, like Quail with Sherry-Mushroom Gravy (at right), the stunning Chocolate-and-Citrus Cassata on the cover (p. 122), or our favorite retro suburban mom dips (p. 104).

A lot of butter, sugar, and chicken stock went into the making of this issue, by the pound and by the gallon. A whole lot of love, too.

HUNTER LEWIS
 @NOTESFROMACOOK
 HUNTER@FOODANDWINE.COM

We invite you to share your celebrations on social media using the hashtag #HowWeHoliday; we'll repost our favorite festive moments @foodandwine.

Sharing Season How chefs ring in the holidays with their teams

IN THE RESTAURANT BUSINESS, many spend their waking hours hard at work in a kitchen or dining room. But during a time of year that's about spending quality time with family and loved ones, that mandate can prove to be a real challenge. That's why this month, we turned to some of our favorite chefs and restaurateurs to ask how they take a beat to celebrate, reflect, and care for their teams during the busiest (and sometimes most stressful) time of the year. —OSET BABUR



2018 F&W Best New Chef Julia Sullivan at her Nashville restaurant, Henrietta Red

"We celebrate with 12 days of cookies for staff meal, leading up to Christmas. Our pastry chef also decorates the restaurant with gingerbread. This year she made a lighthouse, complete with oyster boats!"

—JULIA SULLIVAN
(HENRIETTA RED, NASHVILLE)

"Last year, we booked a private studio and got tattoos, had a snack feast, and braided each other's hair. This year, we rented an old movie theater for a private screening of *Mean Girls*. I love having the chance to let my team relax, eat well, and do something totally out of the ordinary. In 2018, Goldenrod recruited our community of customers and staff to donate enough items for a local family to really have a special holiday season. It was one of the most special experiences I've had."

—ANGELA GARBACZ
(GOLDENROD PASTRIES,
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA)

"This year, we combined the annual Southern tradition of cooking black-eyed pea dishes—some dating back to the Civil War—with the Italian tradition of Feast of the Seven Fishes to cook up one massive, Italy-meets-the-South family meal for our staff, served outdoors under the stars. It's a time for us to come together as a team, to reflect on the past year, and look ahead to new beginnings—all while eating a good meal, of course!"

—JANINE BOOTH &
JEFF MCINNIS
(MI'ITALIA KITCHEN & BAR AND
ROOT & BONE, MIAMI)

"We have the tradition of making homemade gingerbread houses at the restaurant in December and inviting the children of Don Angie's staff to participate in making and decorating along with their parents. We also decorate the kitchen with lights and other holiday decor for the winter holidays to keep it feeling festive and do a Secret Santa-style gift exchange for any staff that wants to participate."

—ANGIE RITO &
SCOTT TACINELLI
(DON ANGIE, NEW YORK CITY)

"We always have a family-style feast at Peach Farm in Boston's Chinatown. We're notorious for ordering enough food for at least 20 people, even though the team is only 8 or 10. We go all-out with the large-format items: whole king crab, twin lobsters, surf clams, frog legs, and all the noodles and spicy vegetables."

—CONOR DENNEHY
(TALULLA, CAMBRIDGE,
MASSACHUSETTS)

"For one week in December last year, we let our staff take over our dessert cart with traditional, nostalgic pastries that reminded them of home. Hits included apple crostata, chocolate mousse cake, cornbread, and triple-berry cheesecake."

—CLAUDIA MARTINEZ
(TINY LOU'S, ATLANTA)

"We have our team help collect canned foods and clothing to make a team-wide holiday donation to a rotating group of charities. Once the holiday season winds down, we like to host a fun, nonalcoholic staff event (that ends with a feast of sorts!) as a special way to welcome everyone back and reconnect."

—MATT ABDOO
(PIG BEACH, NEW YORK CITY)

"This past holiday season, we gathered at Minneapolis' Troubadour Wine Bar for the Queerdo drag show, drank bottles of Bardo's surplus wine supply, and ate delivery all evening, from tacos to Chinese."

—REMY PETTUS
(BARDO, MINNEAPOLIS)

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Sign up for our newsletter, tune in to Kat Kinsman's Communal Table podcast, and read more stories like this at foodandwine.com/fwpro.

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OBSSESSIONS

EDITORS' PICKS

Holiday Gift Guide Festive finds from some of our favorite restaurants, sommeliers, and bartenders

By Oset Babur

F&W
GIFT
GUIDE



BRASS PEDESTAL BOWL

Handmade in Morocco, this bowl from Miami's Mrs. Mandolin is centerpiece perfection. (\$130, mrsmandolin.com)



MATCH SCRATCHER
Each strike on this match holder from JFM in L.A. leaves a mark, building a unique patina over time. (\$130, supplyandadvise.com)

SHINE BRIGHT

PASTA TOOLS

Chef Michael Tusk discovered these stamps and cutters on his first trip to Italy. (\$36–\$60, in-store at Verjus, San Francisco)



BOTTLE OPENER

These bar-ready oysters from Eventide Oyster Co. are carved in wax and set in metal. (\$65, bigtreehospitality.com/shop-eventide)



RAISE A GLASS

1. GABRIEL-GLAS WINE GLASS

Femi Oyediran, co-owner of Graft Wine Shop in Charleston, reminds us of the importance of great stemware. He recommends these lightweight glasses, the same ones they use at Graft, for their durability and versatile shape. (\$31, gabriel-glasinternational.com)

2. MAZAMA WARES DECANTER AND CARAFE

Mazama's glassware first caught our eye at Portland, Oregon, cocktail hot spot The Solo Club, and since then, we've reached for their handblown soda-lime glass carafes and decanters for all our drink-serving needs, from water to wine. (\$165, tannergoods.com)

3. PIENZA 7.5 OZ. TUMBLERS

The brother-sister team at Pienza, in Tuscany, whose family has run a traditional glassblowing studio for generations, make Il Buco's colorful signature drinkware collection. (\$32, ilbuco.com)





SET THE TABLE

1. COLLEPINO TWISTED CANDLES

Called *duplero*, from the Latin *duplex*, meaning double, these twisted beeswax candles spread a subtle scent of honey. Used in Italy for centuries, they're almost too beautiful to burn. (\$28, ilbuco.com)

2. PERFORATED BOWLS

At Michelin-starred Japanese restaurant Masa, these lava-rock bowls were hand-picked by the chef himself and can be heated prior to mealtime to keep dishes piping hot for serving. (\$132, infavorof.com)

3. ASSISI CANDLEHOLDERS

Give those beeswax candles a lift with these match-everything candlesticks, handmade with rare black clay and layered with a translucent white glaze, from the Umbrian countryside. (\$70, ilbuco.com)

4. WOLF CERAMICS

At 2017 Restaurant of the Year Tusk (and other Portland, Oregon, favorites like Bullard), chefs prefer Sarah Wolf's strikingly glazed red stoneware to show off their creations. (\$48–\$180, wolfceramics.com)

5. LEAF LONG PLATE

Smoky charcoal paint on this dish from New York sushi chef Masayoshi Takayama's collaboration with home decor brand Favor makes for a dramatic backdrop for cheeses, fruit, and desserts. (\$225, infavorof.com)

6. MEADOW TUMBLERS

The iconic pendant lights at Kismet in L.A. are larger versions of Helen Levi's beach tumblers, and these dreamy marbled off-shoots are used at Louie Louie in Philadelphia. (\$44, helenlevi.com)



SLICE, DICE, AND SERVE

1. TOWN CUTLER KNIVES

These knives' unique handles are made from California buckeye burl wood; the sturdy, stainless steel blades are heat-treated to stay sharp after many nights of dicing and slicing. (\$500 for a set of 4 or \$900 for a set of 6, in-store at Verjus, San Francisco)

2. TRUFFLE SLICER

This inexpensive truffle slicer from Italian maker Sanelli Ambrogio is easy to hold and clean, and the adjustable screw lets you choose how thick your slices should be. (\$38, in-store at Verjus, San Francisco)

3. JAPANESE CUTTING BOARD

Lindsay Tusk sourced these cutting boards from the Tsukiji Market in Tokyo, and they're the perfect size for making quick work of chopping herbs. (\$80, in-store at Verjus, San Francisco)

4. PEBBLE CUTTING BOARDS

At Forthave Spirits' lab in Brooklyn, Daniel de la Nuez relies on Fort Makers' maple pebble cutting boards (inspired by the smoothness of water-worn rocks) to chop up ingredients for amaro and gin. (\$75–\$140, fortmakers.com)





GIVE GOOD CHEER

1. D'OLIVEIRA MADEIRA

With so many vintages, finding a bottle of this Madeira from someone's birth or wedding year is easy, says Elizabeth Sammuri of Flagstaff House in Boulder, Colorado. (\$115, rarewineco.com)

2. BOTTLED COCKTAILS

With vintage-inspired single-serving bottles, The Grey Market's old fashioned (2a) and Negroni (2b) are stocking-ready. (\$12, in-store at *The Grey Market*, Savannah, Georgia)

3. BILLECART-SALMON ROSÉ

When Sarah Clarke of Mozza Restaurant Group gifts Champagne, she says, a favorite is Billecart-Salmon's rosé. "And let's face the facts, it's an amazing regift." (\$90, champagne-billecart.fr)

4. BERTOUX BRANDY

Sommelier Jordan Salcito loves giving this nuanced, bartender-created brandy. "It's perfect for holiday fireside sipping." (\$44, bertouxbrandy.com)

5. NEVERSINK APPLE APERITIF

This apple-based aperitif is ideal for holiday entertaining, says Claire Sprouse, owner of Brooklyn's Hunky Dory, who swaps it for vermouth in a classic cocktail. (\$50, neversinkspirits.com)

6. SHACKSBURY CIDER CLUB

Tip from Piper Kristensen of Oxalis in NYC: For really special small-batch ciders, sign up for this Vermont producer's cider club. (\$55 per shipment, shacksbury.com)

7. VECCHIO AMARO DEL CAPO

For F&W 2019 Sommelier of the Year Liz Martinez, this licorice-and-gingerbread amaro liqueur from Calabria in southern Italy is a personal favorite. (\$25, vecchioamarodelcapo.com)

8. SIZZLER BOTTLE CAP

"There's nothing worse than a flat gin and tonic," says Sean Hoard of Carpenters Hall in Austin. Use this Japanese stainless steel bottle cap to lock in fizz. (\$10, umamimart.com)

9. PIPETTE MAGAZINE

Haley Fortier, owner of Haley.Henry and Nathalie in Boston and a F&W 2019 Sommelier of the Year, recommends a subscription to *Pipette* magazine, which goes deep into natural wine. (\$75, pipettemagazine.com)





SNACK LIKE A PRO

1. RED CLAY HOT SAUCE GIFT SET

Chef Geoff Rhyne crafts Red Clay hot sauces with a blend of Southern peppers and high-quality vinegar aged in Charleston bourbon barrels. This festive pair of verde and original sauces makes a perfect color combo for the holidays, but it's sure to be a year-round hit. (\$18, redclayhotsauce.com)

2. FAMOUS CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

It takes a lot for us to call any one chef's chocolate chip cookies The Very Best, but at Willa Jean in New Orleans, Kelly Fields spent two whole years perfecting a recipe that uses three types of Valrhona chocolate, plus a sprinkling of sea salt to balance everything out. (\$59 for one dozen, goldbelly.com)

3. BELLECOUR MAPLE SYRUP

We figured that maple syrup aged in rum and whiskey barrels had to be special, and this bottle made by Somerskogen Sugarbush confirmed our suspicions. With hints of cinnamon and vanilla, this bottle is destined for waffles or your morning coffee. (\$24, in-store at Bellecour, Wayzata, Minnesota)

4. SQIRL BIMONTHLY JAM CLUB

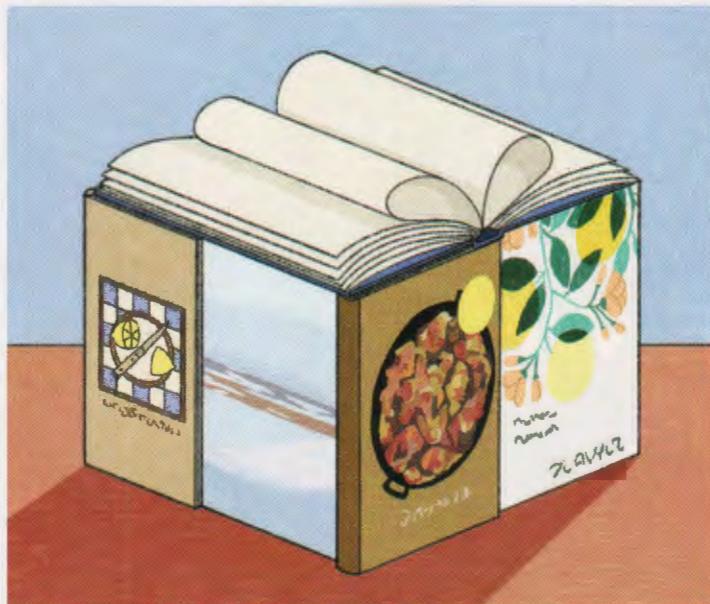
No one makes jam like Sqirl, and a membership to their jam club (think sought-after flavors like Blenheim apricot and Persian mulberry) is the ultimate way to ensure that the recipient won't be tempted to skip breakfast in the new year. (\$90 for a six-month membership, sqirl.myshopify.com)

5. CHOCOLATE CROISSANT BARK

This bark is perhaps the greatest use for leftover pastries, ever. Lacy toasted caramel gives way to buttery, flaky crunch, making these the perfect afternoon treat to pair with a cup of tea or coffee or as snacks for the table with bourbon. (\$1.50, in-store at Star Provisions, Atlanta)

6. ANA'S SPICE KIT

Even outspoken dried-spice skeptics won't be able to resist chef Ana Sortun's jars of Aleppo, Urfa pepper, sumac, and mint, which are so fragrant you'll be tempted to sprinkle them on everything. (\$15, in-store at Sofra, Cambridge, Massachusetts; by phone at 617-661-3161; by email at catering@sofrabakery.com)



BOOK REVIEW

A Cook and Her Books

The best cookbooks to give this holiday season

By Charlotte Druckman

A COOKBOOK CAN BE A KEEPSAKE—a heritage conveyed through recipes, a benchmark treatise on the cuisine of a region or culture—and if you think of those we've continued to love well beyond their publication dates, they tend to have been written by women: Madhur Jaffrey, Diana Kennedy, Joyce Chen, Julia Child, Anissa Helou, Julie Sahni, Elizabeth David, Dorie Greenspan, Marcella Hazan, Jessica B. Harris, Claudia Roden. The next generation of matriarchs is now carrying on that tradition in their own right, and their cookbooks, the heirlooms of the future, are ripe for the giving. There's journalist Toni Tipton-Martin, who has just published the comprehensive *Jubilee: Recipes from Two Centuries of African American Cooking*, or Calcutta-born chef Asma Khan of Darjeeling Express in London, whose *Asma's Indian Kitchen* is a celebration of home cooking that, thanks to her royal Mughlai ancestry, feels incredibly special. We all have friends who are resolving to cook more often. They would likely benefit from a copy of Diana Henry's newest book of one-pot wonders. For them, it's a copy of *From the Oven to the Table* (along with a Dutch oven) to open a world of possibilities, in a single pot, with a single book. (And what a lovely surprise it would be to pair those with Henry's debut work, *Crazy Water, Pickled Lemons*.)

If the idea of collections appeals, a complete set of the *Chez Panisse* cookbooks from Alice Waters' polestar in Berkeley would provide any cook with a preliminary and chic foundation. Edna Lewis, the African American

teacher, chef, and author who did for Southern cooking what Child did for French, died in 2006. This year, her third cookbook, *In Pursuit of Flavor*, was reissued, and in 2018, *Edna Lewis*, an anthology about her, was published. For an essential gift, stack both of those with her second volume, *The Taste of Country Cooking*. Then there's Maida Heatter, the patron saint of home baking. We lost her this year, at the age of 102. If you love someone who gets a thrill from making tarts, *Happiness Is Baking*, a compendium of her greatest recipes, will bring them joy.

Midnight Chicken is really a self-help book masquerading as a cookbook, although you will want to cook from its charmingly illustrated pages. For author Ella Risbridger, who lives with depression, cooking is an act of self-care, and here she spreads both that message and the bonhomie of making dinner.

For the armchair or kitchen traveler, Alissa Timoshkina's *Salt & Time* is an invitation “to share my memories of growing up in Siberia and to accompany me on a journey across the vast country.” It will satisfy both those who read to be transported to a new place and those who wish to re-create the food of a faraway destination as a way to better understand its people.

Georgina Hayden's *Taverna* accomplishes a similar feat, but she invites us to Cyprus, on the Thames. After immigrating to England, her father's parents ran a Cypriot taverna in Tufnell Park for nearly three decades; her maternal grandparents were grocers, selling ingredients from the Eastern Mediterranean island of their birth. Like Timoshkina's, Hayden's is “a book of memories, appreciation and family,” rife with things you want to eat. Pair *Taverna* with *Oklava* to provide an even deeper immersion in the cuisine of Cyprus. The latter, by Selin Kiazim, is the work of the chef at Oklava (the word means “rolling pin”) in London and reflects the cross-pollination of the simpler, “more Mediterranean” cuisine of Cyprus and its more heavily spiced, aromatic Turkish counterpart. Some of Kiazim's recipes are from her restaurant; some are inherited from her mother and grandmother. “Please,” she writes, “don't just look at the pictures—I want to see grubby pages because you have been using this book so much!”

That's the measure of gift-ability, as far as these cookbooks are concerned: grubby hands—and the marks they leave on pages due to frequent use. I would confidently and lovingly bestow any of them on my kindred—just not this year. This year, I'll be giving everyone a copy of *Women on Food*, my new unconventional anthology that celebrates the two entities in its title—same as the cookbooks I've referenced. Because everyone knows the best gifts are the ones you make yourself.



TASTEMAKER

Anything from Gustiamo

How Beatrice Ughi became America's most influential importer of the rarest, purest foods Italy has to offer

By Paul Greenberg

I FIRST CAME TO KNOW the Italian specialty food importer Beatrice Ughi while fishing for anchovies under a dome of stars somewhere off Italy's Amalfi Coast. I'd come on Beatrice's invitation to meet the manufacturers of a Mediterranean sauce called colatura. She'd wanted to investigate how her producer rendered the stuff, drip by drip, over the course of two years from the flesh of fish that range annually from Sicily up to Salerno. We'd spent the morning interrogating the owner of the Nettuno company in the village of Cetara and tasted his colatura's use in a range of different dishes prepared by Pasquale Torrente in

his restaurant Al Convento. But this wasn't enough for Beatrice. Come evening, she convinced a burly, unibrowed fisherman, who did the actual fishing for Nettuno, to bring us aboard his boat, the *Sacro Cuore*, for nine long hours on rough water. At sea, we watched as the captain set out ancient men in lampara dinghies, their lights shining down into the sea, acting as a false moon to draw in the anchovies. We'd waited hour by hour as the fish slowly accumulated. It was just a little before dawn when the fishermen aboard the mother ship at last drew a net around the lighted dinghies and pulled in their catch. Seasick, exhausted, but jubilant that she'd finally seen "the whole process," Beatrice turned to me with her characteristically wry smile and declared, "Now this is really slow food!"

If anyone has the right to look at an Italian culinary product and announce that it is truly artisan; natural; and, in the best way, slow, it is Beatrice Ughi. For the past 20 years, her Bronx-based company, Gustiamo, has accumulated a library, product by product, of the rarest and purest foods Italy has to offer. By building careful and respectful relationships with farmers, distillers, bakers, and confectioners, she has preserved in the amber of her catalog the endangered elegance that made Italian food world-famous in the first place—an elegance that compelled the writer Mark Bittman in his Christmas shopping newsletter last year to recommend "any products from Gustiamo." Indeed, it is more than a happy coincidence that Beatrice shares a name with one of the guides in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Her goal is to lead Americans out of the inferno of red sauce chicanery, past the purgatorio of Batali-style bluster, and up to the *paradiso* that flows from local Italian artisan producers' true passion for real food.

Curiously, Beatrice's pathway to what is now her life's true calling was anything but paradisiacal. Growing up in Naples during the Elena Ferrante era, she watched as her mother prepared elaborate, complicated meals

A fluorescent-green pistachio spread is sold at Gustiamo for what at first appears to be a small fortune. The price, however, melts away the moment the pistachios hit your palate, taking you on a journey to the Sicilian orchards where they're grown.

and served them to everyone—except her family. "My mother would make the most beautiful dinners for sophisticated guests," Beatrice recalls now, "and she would lock me and my brother in our room and feed us crap." By the time she immigrated to the U.S. in the 1980s as an accountant for the firm of Ernst & Young, she was living on a diet of SlimFast. But in the late 1990s, as the internet was growing, fate intervened. A small Italian start-up invited her to join their 1.0 food venture. When the internet experienced its first bust a year later, the Italians fled home and left Beatrice with the business. At that point, she could have closed up shop and thrown in the *asciugamano*. But as she came to know the small clutch of producers who'd started selling with Gustiamo, something strange happened. She fell in love, at last, with food.

THAT LOVE WAS ON PASSIONATE DISPLAY when, on another occasion, I traveled to the Taste specialty food show in Florence with Beatrice to meet with her favorites. We stopped by the booth of the Cilento company Santomiele, which produces a fantastically flavorful fagottino for Beatrice—a mélange of white figs, almonds, and candied orange peel, encased in fig leaves and packaged neatly in a map of where the fruit is grown. Elsewhere we ran into the elegant chocolatier Marco Colzani, who makes a fluorescent-green pistachio spread composed of only four ingredients: pistachios, olive oil, sugar, and sea salt. This, along with a Colzani hazelnut spread that makes Nutella seem like a cruel joke, is sold at gustiamo.com for what at first appears to be a small fortune. The price, however, melts away the moment the pistachios hit your palate, taking you on a journey to the Sicilian orchards where they're grown.

It is these transports, these transcendent moments of culture and flavor that led Beatrice and Danielle Aquino Roithmayr, Beatrice's Italian-American number-two, to stage Gustiamo pop-up food events at their Bronx warehouse and in locations throughout New York. On one occasion I played Ping-Pong in a Gustiamo-sponsored tournament against the Italian consul in New York and then later chatted with him over thin-crust pizza sauced with their flavor-bursting Gustarosso San Marzano tomatoes and bright-punch capers from the island of Pantelleria. "Beatrice is really a national treasure," the consul told me after dispatching me in the tournament. The consul, it turns out, has a mean backhand.

Another time, we gathered in the Bronx to celebrate the first harvest of Il Tratturello olive oil and to discuss the way this most treasured of Italian liquids has suffered in the global marketplace. We let the fresh oil spread across our palates and felt the

miracle of a product made in small batches on a single estate. Today, some of the supposedly Italian olive oil that comes to America is adulterated with mass-made oil from Tunisia and Turkey. And even when Italian food is truly Italian, an ever-larger portion is being co-opted by the Mafia, which squeezes its producers into insolvency. As the food critic and Italian food specialist Katie Parla wrote, "The corruption is so extensive it's nearly

impossible to ensure that the [Italian] food we eat ... has been harvested by people earning a dignified, living wage, or any wage at all." Fortunately, thanks to Gustiamo, Parla concluded "you can fight the Mafia from the safety of your own home with every online [Gustiamo] purchase."

And fight Beatrice does. It's her strength, her passion, and her playfulness that come through in every product. "I just love Beatrice," Victor Hazan, husband and collaborator to the late great Italian cookbook writer Marcella Hazan, said at a dinner a couple of years ago at Gustiamo's warehouse. "She is so ... so ... bold." Bold indeed. And playful. And gracious. And special. Everything we want Italian food to be. Indeed, if Marcella Hazan taught us how to take that very bold and special feeling of Italy when we cook, Beatrice Ughi has at last brought that feeling of the real Italy to us when we shop.



From Gustiamo, with Love

F&W GUSTIAMO GIFT BOX (\$160)

Since 1999, Gustiamo has been importing the most authentic food from Italian artisans who are dedicated to their traditions. For the readers of *Food & Wine*, Gustiamo has pulled together a gift box featuring the flavors from this article: **colatura di alici**, produced by drawing off the liquid given off by curing anchovies under salt, is an easy way to add concentrated umami anchovy flavor to a dish. (Stumped for how to use it? A printout of the closely guarded family recipe for **Spaghetti con La Colatura** from the maker, Raffaella

of Nettuno, and some bronze die-cut **Martelli spaghetti** will get you started.) Two more favorite producers are represented by **DaniCoop San Marzano Tomatoes**, from a Campania consortium of tomato farmers, and meaty **La Nicchia salted capers**, cured and packed in Trapani sea salt. To sweeten the deal, you'll find Marco Colzani's **chocolate hazelnut spread** and **pistachio spread**, complex **aspodel honey** from Sardinia, and a delicate **white fig jam** from farmer Francesco Vastola. (To order, visit gustiamo.com/foodandwine.)

HANDBOOK

WHAT TO COOK NOW

Top Nosh Rock the holidays with the crispiest latkes, the 12 best-ever side dishes, and more.

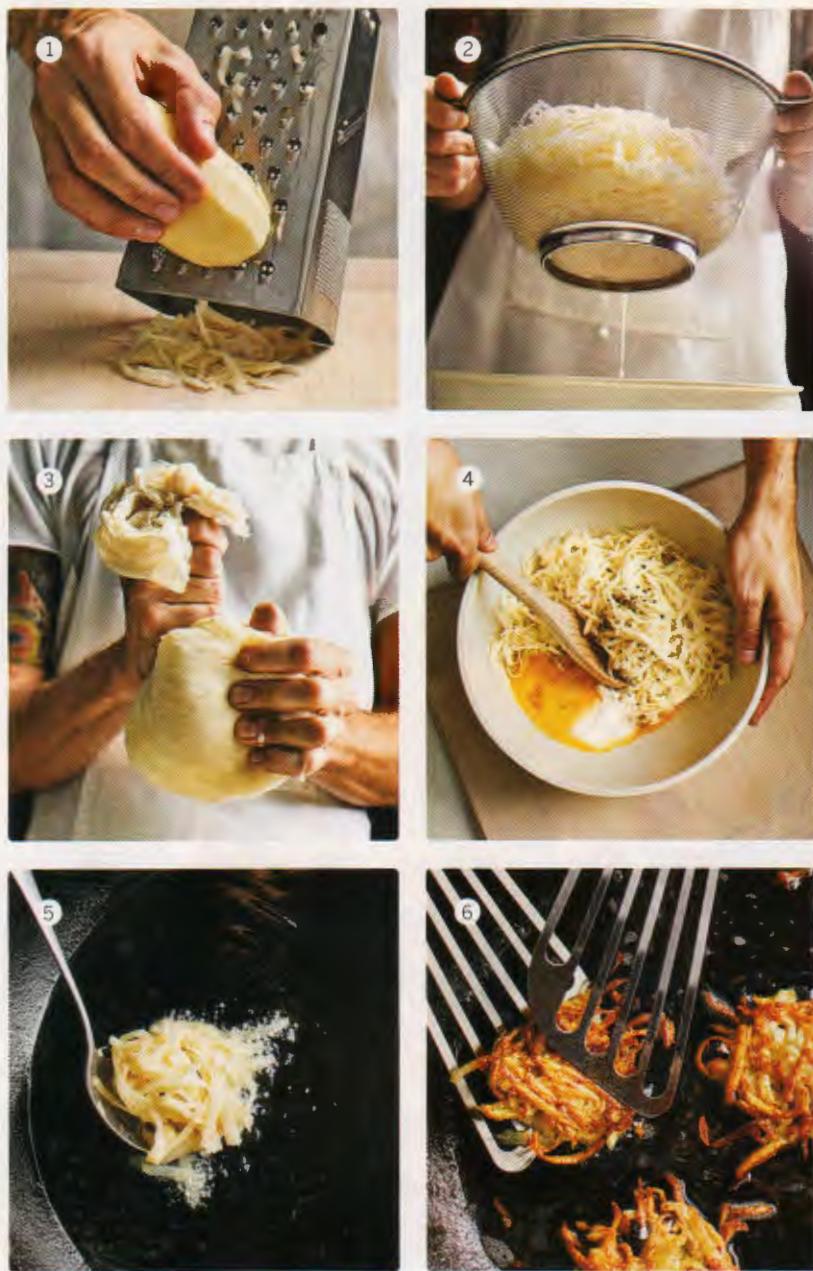
Turn the page for
chef Marcus Jacobs'
latke technique.

PERFECT POTATO LATKES

AT MARJIE'S GRILL in New Orleans, Hanukkah is the cue for the restaurant's locally beloved annual festival of fried potato pancakes. For each of the Eight Nights of Latkes, chef Marcus Jacobs offers a new variation on latkes inspired by pancakes from around the world. One evening, a scallion-studded latke gets topped with barbecued duck; the next night, there's a brisket latke with crème fraîche and dill. A perennial favorite is the bagel latke sprinkled with everything bagel spice and crowned with a smoked Gulf fish spread and scallions. Jacobs and general manager Caitlin Carney started Eight Nights of Latkes to bring their shared Jewish heritage to the seasonal, Southeast Asian-meets-New Orleanian menu at Marjie's. "Latkes are probably the most approachable and familiar Jewish holiday cooking," says Jacobs. "I've made them my whole life." At the restaurant, Jacobs starts with a basic latke technique, hand-grating potatoes and onions for a crisp, light, never gummy latke. His simple ratio of one onion to three potatoes is just right and makes the recipe easy to scale for celebrations of any size. Since neither the restaurant nor the chef keep kosher, not all of the suggested toppings will fit everyone's celebration; mix and match as desired. —KELSEY YOUNGMAN

ACTIVE 45 MIN; TOTAL 50 MIN
MAKES ABOUT 28 LATKES

- 2 lb. russet potatoes (about 3 medium potatoes), peeled and halved crosswise
- 1 small (4-oz.) yellow onion
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- Schmaltz or vegetable oil, for frying



1

PEEL AND GRATE POTATOES AND ONION

Peel potatoes and onion; cut potatoes in half crosswise. Grate potatoes and onion on the large holes of a box grater to make long strands.

2

DRAIN GRATED POTATOES AND ONION

Transfer grated potato-onion mixture to a colander placed over a large bowl; press mixture firmly to release liquid. Let stand 5 minutes.

3

SQUEEZE DRY

Transfer potato-onion mixture to a square of cheesecloth or a clean kitchen towel; twist and squeeze to remove excess liquid, and discard liquid.

4

MAKE THE BATTER

Stir together potato-onion mixture, flour, eggs, and pepper in a large bowl. Just before frying, stir in salt. (Salt draws out moisture, so adding it last ensures the mixture doesn't become watery.)

5

FRY THE LATKES

Heat 1/8 inch schmaltz in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium. Spoon 2 tablespoons batter for each latke into hot schmaltz, spacing 2 inches apart. Press lightly with a spatula to flatten.

6

FLIP AND FINISH

Fry until golden and crisp on one side, 3 to 4 minutes. Use two spatulas to carefully turn latkes; fry until crisp on other side, about 3 minutes. Drain; season with salt, and top as desired.

8 WAYS WITH LATKES

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

Classic

Top each latke with about $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sour cream and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon applesauce.

Scallion Pancake

Stir about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ cup chopped scallions or garlic scapes into potato mixture before frying. Top each fried latke with a 1-inch piece of barbecued duck, quail, or chicken.

Marjie's Special

Top each latke with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sour cream and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon caviar. At Marjie's, Jacobs uses Cajun Caviar, a local Louisiana bowfin roe.

Pomegranate and Honey

Top each latke with 1 teaspoon pomegranate arils, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon honey, and a pinch of flaky sea salt.

Ricotta and Orange Marmalade

Top each latke with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ricotta cheese and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon orange marmalade.

Everything Bagel

Omit sprinkling additional salt after frying; instead sprinkle each latke with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon everything bagel seasoning. Spread each with 1 teaspoon whitefish salad; top each with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon capers, 2 small red onion slices, and a 1-inch piece of lox.

Brisket with Crème Fraîche and Dill

Top each latke with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon crème fraîche, a 1-inch piece of smoked brisket, and a dill sprig.

Korean Seafood

Top each latke with 1 to 2 small cooked shrimp, 1 to 2 cooked squid tentacles, and a pinch of kimchi. Serve with chopped fresh chives and soy sauce or tamari for dipping.



F&W FAVORITES

Side Hustle

Shake up your table with these vegetable sides.

Endive Salad with Kumquats and Pomegranate Arils

TOTAL 15 MIN. SERVES 6

Any bitter chicory, like escarole or radicchio, works in place of endive in this colorful salad. Leave the cheese crumbles on the larger side; they add creamy balance to the dish.

2 Tbsp. Champagne vinegar
1 Tbsp. finely chopped shallot
1 1/2 tsp. granulated sugar
1 tsp. Dijon mustard

1 tsp. kosher salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
6 small heads red and green endive, quartered lengthwise (about 14 oz.)
1/2 cup kumquats (about 2 3/4 oz.), seeded and thinly sliced
1/4 cup pomegranate arils
2 Tbsp. salted roasted pepitas
1 1/2 oz. ricotta salata cheese or goat cheese, crumbled (about 1/3 cup)
1/2 cup loosely packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves

1. Stir together vinegar and shallot in a small bowl; let stand 5 minutes. Whisk in sugar, mustard, salt, and pepper. Whisk in oil until mixture is smooth.

2. Arrange endive quarters on a large platter. Sprinkle evenly with kumquat slices, pomegranate arils, roasted pepitas, and crumbled cheese. Drizzle dressing evenly over salad; sprinkle with parsley. —ANNA THEOKITIS

MAKE AHEAD The dressing can be made and stored in an airtight container in refrigerator up to 2 days ahead of time.

photography by CAITLIN BENSEL



Sausage-Spiced Cauliflower Steaks

ACTIVE 25 MIN; TOTAL 50 MIN
SERVES 8

Toasted fennel seeds, black pepper, and orange zest lend a sausage-like flavor to these roasted cauliflower steaks. Flipping the cauliflower during roasting ensures there are plenty of caramelized florets under the marinara and melty cheese.

- 3 medium cauliflower heads (about 1½ to 2 lb. each)
- 5 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1½ tsp. fennel seeds
- 1 tsp. fine sea salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. orange zest
- ¼ tsp. garlic powder
- 1 cup best-quality marinara sauce
- 8 oz. fontina cheese, shredded (about 2 cups), or 8 (2/3-oz.) provolone cheese slices
- ¼ oz. Parmesan cheese, grated (about 2 Tbsp.)

1. Preheat oven to 450°F with rack in upper third of oven. Cut each cauliflower head vertically through core into 2 to 3 (3/4-inch-thick) steaks to form 8 steaks. (Reserve remaining cauliflower for another use.) Arrange steaks in a single layer on a large rimmed baking sheet. Brush oil evenly on both sides of steaks.

2. Cook fennel seeds in a small saucepan over medium-high, stirring occasionally, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Transfer to a mortar, and crush using a pestle (or coarsely grind in a spice grinder). Stir in salt, pepper, orange zest, and garlic powder. Sprinkle mixture evenly over both sides of cauliflower steaks.

3. Roast cauliflower steaks in preheated oven until golden brown and tender, about 30 minutes, flipping halfway through roasting time. Remove from oven; increase oven temperature to broil.

4. Spread cauliflower steaks evenly with marinara; top with cheeses. Broil until cheeses melt and start to brown, 6 to 8 minutes. —ANNA THEOKTISTO

MAKE AHEAD The cauliflower may be cut day ahead, wrapped in plastic wrap, and stored in refrigerator. Sausage spice can be made several days ahead and stored in an airtight container at room temperature.



Fried Wild Rice with Mustard Greens and Mushrooms

TOTAL 20 MIN; SERVES 8

Wild rice retains a pleasant crunch that adds satisfying texture to this stir-fry. Combined with meaty mushrooms, spicy mustard greens, and celery, this hearty side is also great for lunch the next day.

- 7 Tbsp. canola oil, divided
- 8 oz. fresh oyster mushrooms (about 5 cups), torn into large pieces
- 8 oz. fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick slices (about 5 cups)
- 2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 2 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 1 Tbsp. grated peeled fresh ginger
- 1 Tbsp. grated garlic

- 6 scallions, thinly sliced, white and green parts separated
- 3 cups cooked and cooled wild rice (from 1 cup uncooked wild rice)
- 3 Tbsp. lower-sodium soy sauce
- 4 tsp. rice vinegar
- 2 tsp. granulated sugar
- 8 cups loosely packed chopped fresh mustard greens, stemmed kale, or Swiss chard
- 2 large celery stalks, cut diagonally into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick pieces
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup celery leaves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. black pepper

1. Working in 3 batches, heat 2 tablespoons canola oil in a large skillet over high. Add oyster mushrooms and shiitake mushrooms to skillet in a single layer; cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer to a baking sheet. Sprinkle all mushrooms evenly with 1 teaspoon salt.

2. Add sesame oil and remaining 1 tablespoon canola oil to skillet; heat over high. Add ginger, garlic, and white parts of scallions; cook, stirring often, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add rice, soy sauce, vinegar, sugar, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring often, until rice is warm, about 2 minutes. Add greens in batches, stirring until just wilted before adding next batch, 1 to 2 minutes total. Stir in celery, celery leaves, green parts of scallions, and mushrooms. Cook, stirring often, until celery leaves are just wilted, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a serving platter; sprinkle with pepper. —ANNA THEOKTISTO

MAKE AHEAD Wild rice can be cooked and stored in refrigerator up to 3 days.



Speck-Wrapped Haricots Verts with Date Molasses

ACTIVE 20 MIN; TOTAL 30 MIN

SERVES 8

A cousin of prosciutto, cold-smoked speck has a sturdier texture, which makes it perfect for wrapping bundles of crisp-tender beans. Date molasses is thinner than regular molasses; if substituting regular molasses, reduce the cook time slightly.

4 qt. water
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup plus $1\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. kosher salt, divided
 1 lb. haricots verts, trimmed
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup date molasses (such as Mideast Date Molasses) or regular unsulfured molasses
 3 Tbsp. sherry vinegar
 3 Tbsp. olive oil
 $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. black pepper
 8 thin speck slices
 $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fried shallots

1. Preheat oven to 475°F. Bring 4 quarts water to a boil in a large pot over medium-high. Add $\frac{1}{3}$ cup salt, and return to a boil. Add green beans; cook until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Drain. Transfer beans to a large bowl filled with ice water; let stand 3 minutes. Drain. Dry beans thoroughly.

2. Stir together molasses and vinegar in a small skillet; bring to a simmer over medium. Cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture coats the back of a spoon and reduces to about $\frac{1}{3}$ cup, about 4 minutes. Remove from heat; let cool 5 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, toss together beans, oil, pepper, and remaining $1\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Divide beans evenly into 8 bundles. Place 1 bundle at the short end of 1 speck slice; roll up lengthwise. Repeat process with remaining beans and speck.

4. Place 3 tablespoons cooled molasses mixture in a small bowl; reserve for serving. Arrange bundles, seam sides down, on a rimmed baking sheet lined with aluminum foil. Brush bundles evenly with remaining molasses mixture. Bake in preheated oven until bundles are glazed and ends begin to char, 8 to 10 minutes.

5. Arrange bundles on a serving platter. Drizzle with reserved molasses mixture, and sprinkle with desired amount of fried shallots. —PAIGE GRANDJEAN

MAKE AHEAD Green beans can be blanched and refrigerated 1 day ahead.

NOTE Look for store-bought fried shallots at your local Asian market or online.



Two-Bite Parmesan Biscuits

ACTIVE 20 MIN; TOTAL 45 MIN
SERVES 8 TO 10

These crave-worthy, frico-footed biscuits are baked on a bed of Parmesan cheese, resulting in a crispy, cheesy crust around the bottom of each biscuit. They are an easy addition to a festive bread basket. Keep ingredients extra cold to ensure the loftiest rise.

- 1 (6 1/4-oz.) Parmesan cheese wedge
- 3 cups self-rising flour (such as White Lily) (about 12 3/4 oz.), sifted, plus more for work surface
- 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. black pepper, plus more for sprinkling
- 3/4 cup cold unsalted butter (6 oz.), cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 cup cold buttermilk
- 1 large egg, beaten

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Break cheese into large chunks; transfer to a food processor, and pulse until coarsely ground, 16 to 20 times. (You should have a little over 1 2/3 cups ground cheese.) Reserve 2 tablespoons cheese.

2. Stir together flour, sugar, pepper, and 1 cup ground cheese in a large bowl. Cut butter into flour mixture using a pastry blender or your fingers until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in buttermilk until a shaggy dough forms.

3. Transfer dough to a floured work surface. Pat into a 1-inch-thick rectangle, and cut into quarters; stack quarters on top of each other. (Dough will be crumbly at first but will come together as you work.) Pat stacked dough back into a rectangle. Repeat cutting and stacking 2 more times. Roll or pat dough into a 3/4-inch-thick rectangle (about 8 1/2 x 10 inches). Cut rounds out of dough using a 1 1/2-inch round cutter, pressing straight down,

without twisting cutter. (You'll have about 35 biscuits; discard dough scraps.)

4. Sprinkle 2/3 cup ground cheese in a 12- x 8-inch rectangle on prepared baking sheet. Arrange biscuits 1/2 inch apart on cheese. Freeze 10 minutes. Remove from freezer; brush biscuit tops evenly with egg. Sprinkle lightly with pepper and reserved 2 tablespoons ground cheese.

5. Bake in preheated oven until biscuits are golden brown, 12 to 14 minutes. Serve warm, or let cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes. —ANNA THEOKTISTO

MAKE AHEAD Biscuits can be prepared through step 3 and frozen up to 3 months. Let thaw 30 minutes; proceed with step 4, skipping the 10-minute freezing time.

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Beet-Carrot Slaw with Garlicky Labneh

ACTIVE 15 MIN; TOTAL 20 MIN
SERVES 6

Rich pistachios, mint leaves, cracked coriander, and lemon zest punch up the raw winter root vegetables in this refreshing salad. Make fast work of shredding the carrots and beets using a food processor. To keep their vibrant colors from bleeding, be sure to keep the carrots and beet separate after grating; wait to combine them until just before serving.

1 cup labneh or plain full-fat Greek yogurt
1 small garlic clove, grated
4 medium carrots
1 large red beet, peeled and quartered
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tbsp. lemon zest plus 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 2 lemons), divided
1 Tbsp. Champagne vinegar
2 tsp. honey
1 tsp. kosher salt
1/4 tsp. black pepper
1/4 cup salted roasted pistachios, chopped
1/4 cup fresh mint leaves
1 tsp. toasted coriander seeds, crushed

1. Stir together labneh and garlic in a small bowl until combined. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

2. Grate carrots in a food processor fitted with the grating attachment; transfer to a bowl. Grate beet, and transfer to a separate bowl.

3. Whisk together oil, lemon juice, vinegar, honey, salt, and pepper in a small bowl until combined. Drizzle half of the vinaigrette (about 1/4 cup) over grated carrots; stir to combine. Let stand 5 minutes.

4. Spread labneh mixture on a serving platter. Top with carrot mixture and grated beets; drizzle with remaining vinaigrette. Sprinkle with pistachios, mint, coriander seeds, and lemon zest.

—ANNA THEOKTISTO

MAKE AHEAD Garlicky labneh can be made up to 3 days in advance.



Broccoli and Beer Cheese Cocottes

ACTIVE 35 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 5 MIN
SERVES 6

An update on the classic broccoli-cheese casserole, these individual servings of bubbly lager-spiked Red Leicester cheese sauce over broccoli with crunchy croutons are crowd-pleasers.

Cooking spray

- 4 qt. water
- 1/3 cup plus 2 1/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided, plus more to taste
- 12 cups roughly chopped broccoli (from 3 large broccoli heads, stems discarded)
- 1/2 cup plus 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter (5 oz.), divided
- 1 cup finely chopped yellow onion
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour (about 2 1/2 oz.)
- 1 (12-oz.) bottle lager beer (such as Heineken)
- 1 cup half-and-half

- 12 oz. Red Leicester cheese or mild cheddar cheese, grated (about 3 cups)
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. dry mustard
- 3/4 tsp. black pepper
- 2 oz. rye bread (about 2 slices), torn into 1/2-inch pieces (about 1 cup)

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Lightly coat 6 (8-ounce) cocottes or ramekins with cooking spray; set aside. Bring 4 quarts water to a boil in a large pot over high. Add 1/3 cup salt; let water return to a boil. Add broccoli; cook, stirring occasionally, until just tender, about 3 minutes. Drain. Transfer broccoli to a large bowl filled with ice water; let stand 5 minutes. Drain. Arrange broccoli in a single layer on a baking sheet lined with paper towels; pat dry. Transfer broccoli to a large bowl; set aside.
2. Melt 1/2 cup butter in a large saucepan over medium. Add onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 8 minutes. Gradually whisk in flour; cook, whisking constantly, until flour is completely

incorporated and lightly browned, about 2 minutes. Gradually whisk in beer and half-and-half; cook, whisking constantly, until sauce thickens and begins to bubble, 3 to 4 minutes. Gradually whisk in cheese, Worcestershire, dry mustard, pepper, and 2 teaspoons salt until smooth.

3. Pour cheese sauce over broccoli; stir to combine. Season with salt to taste. Spoon mixture evenly into prepared cocottes, and arrange on a rimmed baking sheet.

4. Microwave remaining 2 tablespoons butter in a medium-size microwavable bowl on HIGH until melted, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Add bread pieces and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt; toss to coat. Sprinkle mixture evenly over broccoli mixture in cocottes. Bake, uncovered, in preheated oven until bread is golden brown and cheese is bubbly, 16 to 20 minutes.

—PAIGE GRANDJEAN

MAKE AHEAD Broccoli can be prepared and refrigerated up to 1 day ahead.

NOTE Recipe may be prepared in a 9-inch square baking dish.



Mixed Onion Agrodolce

TOTAL 25 MIN; SERVES 8

The combination of shallots, cipollini onions, and pearl onions delivers a lovely contrast of shapes and texture. Sherry vinegar and prunes meld for a sour and sweet agrodolce that makes this side a perfect pairing for pork or turkey.

- 5 Tbsp. unsalted butter (2½ oz.), divided
- 6 shallots, halved lengthwise, root ends trimmed and left intact
- 10 oz. cipollini onions, halved lengthwise, root ends trimmed and left intact
- 2 tsp. finely chopped garlic
- 2 Tbsp. (1 oz.) dry sherry or white wine
- 1 (15-oz.) pkg. frozen pearl onions, thawed and patted dry
- ½ cup sherry vinegar
- ½ cup white wine vinegar
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 Tbsp. fresh thyme leaves, plus more for garnish
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ cup quartered pitted prunes

1. Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large skillet over medium-high until sizzling. Add shallots and cipollini onions; cook, undisturbed, until bottoms are lightly browned, 3 to 4 minutes. Shake pan to loosen; cook, stirring occasionally, until crisp-tender when pierced with a knife, 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Remove from heat.

2. Pour sherry into skillet, scraping bottom of skillet to loosen browned bits. Stir in pearl onions, sherry vinegar, white wine vinegar, honey, thyme, salt, and remaining 3 tablespoons butter. Bring mixture to a boil over high. Reduce heat to medium-high; simmer, stirring often, until onions are lightly glazed, 5 to 7 minutes, adding prunes during last 2 minutes of cooking. Transfer to a serving bowl; garnish with thyme. —LIZ MERVOSH

MAKE AHEAD This recipe can be prepared and refrigerated up to 1 day ahead. Reheat gently before serving.

NOTE If desired, this recipe can be prepared by substituting an additional 15-ounce package of frozen pearl onions for the cipollini onions and shallots.

To remove the fibrous core from parsnips, quarter them then slice away the tough center of each piece.

Chile-Mint Parsnips

TOTAL 25 MIN. SERVES 6 TO 8

Inspired by some of Associate Restaurant Editor Oset Babur's favorite flavors from Turkey, these parsnips are braised in spiced brown butter and topped with smoky-sweet Urfa biber chile flakes and tart dried barberries. Can't find dried barberries? Unsweetened dried cranberries make a great substitute.

- 1 Tbsp. thin lemon peel strips (about 1½ inches long) plus 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon), divided
- ¼ tsp. cornstarch
- 7 Tbsp. unsalted butter (3½ oz.), cut into pieces, divided
- 1½ tsp. cumin seeds
- 1 (4-inch) Ceylon cinnamon stick
- 3 mint sprigs plus ¼ cup loosely packed small tender fresh mint leaves, divided

2 lb. parsnips, quartered lengthwise, tough fibrous cores removed

1½ cups water

1 Tbsp. honey

1¾ tsp. kosher salt, divided

1½ Tbsp. dried barberries or chopped unsweetened dried cranberries

1½ tsp. ground Urfa biber (Urfa pepper) or a pinch of crushed red pepper

1. Whisk together lemon juice and cornstarch in a small bowl; set aside.

2. Melt ½ cup butter in a deep 12- to 14-inch skillet over medium. Cook, stirring often, until milk solids turn nut-brown, 5 to 8 minutes.

3. Working quickly, add lemon peel strips, cumin seeds, cinnamon stick, and mint sprigs to butter. (Mint will cause mixture to splatter.) Cook over medium, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30

seconds. Add parsnips, 1½ cups water, honey, and 1 teaspoon salt.

4. Bring parsnip mixture to a boil over high. Boil, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes. Cover and reduce heat to medium; simmer, undisturbed, until parsnips are crisp-tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Uncover; stir in lemon juice mixture, remaining 3 tablespoons butter, and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture is creamy and parsnips are glazed, about 1 minute.

5. Transfer parsnips to a large platter. Remove and discard cinnamon stick and mint sprigs. Drizzle glaze over parsnips. Sprinkle with mint leaves, barberries, and Urfa biber. Serve immediately or at room temperature. —LIZ MERVOSH

NOTE Urfa biber is a ground dried Turkish chile pepper with smoky heat and a raisin-like flavor. You can purchase it at burlapandbarrel.com.



Roasted Citrus with Crunchy Three-Seed Brittle

ACTIVE 20 MIN; TOTAL 50 MIN
SERVES 6 TO 8

Quickly roasting sliced citrus makes it extra sweet and juicy in this elegant winter salad. A sweet and savory brittle spiked with chile oil and studded with sesame, pumpkin, and sunflower seeds is the perfect counterpoint to the mixed citrus.

- 1/4 cup** white sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup** black sesame seeds
- 1/4 cup** raw pepitas
- 1/4 cup** salted roasted sunflower seed kernels
- 2 Tbsp.** dark brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp.** plus **3/4 tsp.** hot chile-sesame oil (such as S&B La-Yu Chili Oil), divided
- 1/2 tsp.** orange zest
- 1/2 tsp.** kosher salt, divided

- 1 Tbsp.** plus **2 tsp.** honey, divided
- 1 1/2 Tbsp.** fresh lime juice
- 4 lb.** mixed fresh citrus fruits (such as blood oranges, grapefruit, and Meyer lemons), peeled and cut crosswise into **1/2-inch** rounds
- Flaky sea salt (such as Maldon)

1. Position one oven rack 3 inches from heat; position second rack in middle of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Stir together white sesame seeds, black sesame seeds, pepitas, sunflower seed kernels, brown sugar, **3/4 teaspoon** chile-sesame oil, orange zest, and **1/4 teaspoon** kosher salt in a small bowl. Gradually drizzle in **1 tablespoon** honey, stirring to combine. Transfer to prepared baking sheet; press mixture into an 8-inch square.
3. Bake on middle rack in preheated oven until sugar melts, 8 to 10 minutes. Let

cool on baking sheet 25 minutes (brittle will harden as it cools). Break into bite-size pieces.

4. Stir together lime juice, **1 tablespoon** chile-sesame oil, remaining **2 teaspoons** honey, and remaining **1/4 teaspoon** kosher salt in a small bowl; set aside.

5. Increase oven temperature to high broil. Gently toss together citrus and remaining **1 tablespoon** chile-sesame oil in a large bowl. Arrange citrus in an even layer on a wire rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. Broil on top rack in preheated oven until sizzling, 1 minute and 30 seconds to 2 minutes.

6. Transfer roasted citrus to a large platter. Drizzle evenly with lime juice mixture; garnish with sea salt, and top with brittle.

—LIZ MERVOSH

MAKE AHEAD Brittle can be made up to 2 days ahead and stored in an airtight container at room temperature.



Torn Escarole Salad with Warm Bacon Vinaigrette

TOTAL 30 MIN; SERVES 6 TO 8

Lightly spicy croutons tossed in chile-sesame oil before toasting, smoky bacon, and crumbled blue cheese add rich, savory dimension to this quick, dinner-worthy salad. A dollop of apple butter adds a natural sweetness to the dressing, but honey can be used in its place.

- 6 cups torn crusty Italian bread
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup hot chile-sesame oil (such as S&B La-Yu Chili Oil) or olive oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 4 thick-cut applewood-smoked bacon slices, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup finely chopped shallot
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. apple butter or 2 tsp. honey
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Dijon mustard
- 6 cups torn escarole
- 2 small Honeycrisp apples, cut into matchsticks
- 4 oz. mild blue cheese (such as Gorgonzola dolce), crumbled (about 1 cup)

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss together bread, chile-sesame oil, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt on a rimmed baking sheet; spread in an even layer. Bake in preheated oven, stirring occasionally, until golden brown and crisp, about 20 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, cook bacon in a large skillet over medium, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer bacon to a plate lined with paper towels, reserving 3 tablespoons drippings in skillet. Add shallot to skillet; cook over low, scraping any browned bits from bottom of skillet, until shallot is softened, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat; whisk in olive oil, apple butter, vinegar, Dijon, and remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt.

3. Toss together escarole, apples, cheese, and bacon in a large bowl. Add shallot dressing; toss to coat. Transfer to a large platter; sprinkle with croutons.

—LIZ MERVOSH

MAKE AHEAD Croutons can be made a day ahead and stored in an airtight container at room temperature.



Schmaltzy Hakurei Turnips with Rosemary

TOTAL 30 MIN; SERVES 6

Inspired by the flavor of root vegetables roasted under a chicken, these skillet-cooked turnips get their flavor from maple syrup, Dijon mustard, and fresh rosemary. Japanese white hakurei turnips (also called salad turnips) are much sweeter than regular purple and white turnips and taste great served with their greens. Start the turnips in a cold pan; this helps bring them to perfect tenderness without browning too quickly.

- 2 lb. hakurei turnips with tops
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. pure maple syrup, divided
- 2 tsp. sherry vinegar
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard

1½ tsp. kosher salt, divided, plus more to taste

½ tsp. coarsely ground black pepper

¼ cup melted schmaltz (such as Fatworks) or unsalted butter, divided

¼ cup finely chopped shallot

2 tsp. finely chopped garlic

1½ tsp. finely chopped fresh rosemary

2 Tbsp. water

1. Trim turnip stems to ½ inch; reserve greens. Cut trimmed turnips into ¾-inch wedges to equal 5 cups. Coarsely chop turnip greens to equal 8 loosely packed cups. (Reserve any remaining turnips and greens for another use.)

2. Whisk together oil, 1 tablespoon maple syrup, vinegar, Dijon, and ½ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Add chopped turnip greens; massage to coat greens. Let stand at room temperature 20 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, toss together turnip wedges, pepper, ½ teaspoon salt, and 2 tablespoons schmaltz in a bowl. Arrange turnip mixture in a single layer in a 12- to 14-inch skillet. Cook over medium-high, stirring occasionally, until turnips are crisp-tender and browned, 15 to 17 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl.

4. Return skillet to heat over low. Add shallot, garlic, rosemary, and remaining 2 tablespoons schmaltz; cook, stirring constantly, until mixture is fragrant and softened, about 1 minute and 30 seconds. Remove from heat; stir in 2 tablespoons water, remaining 1 teaspoon maple syrup, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Pour over turnips in bowl; toss to combine. Season with salt to taste. Transfer greens to a platter; top with turnips. —LIZ MERVOSH

NOTE If you can't find hakurei turnips; peel regular turnips, and cut them into ¾-inch pieces.



MOST WANTED

Layer Up

Ethereal sweet potato slices stack up to a fork-tender masterpiece.

RECIPE FROM
THE ESSENTIAL
 BIRMINGHAM,
 ALABAMA

LAST DECEMBER AT THE ESSENTIAL, an all-day café in Birmingham, Alabama, I tried a slice of the Sweet Potato Pavé from executive pastry chef and co-owner Kristen Farmer Hall. It struck me as something I wanted at my holiday table. With its creamy layers and crispy edges, it's as good with a roast as it is with sweetened crème fraîche for dessert. And best of all, it's make-ahead. "I love being a host," Hall says. This recipe lets us be just that. —HUNTER LEWIS

Sweet Potato Pavé

ACTIVE 55 MIN; TOTAL 4 HR 25 MIN,
 PLUS 8 HR REFRIGERATION
 SERVES 8

To get the pavé edges even crispier, skip the oven roasting in step 6. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium. Add 4 pavé slices, and cook, flipping gently, until browned on all sides, 8 to 10 minutes, adding 2 tablespoons butter during the last 2 minutes. Repeat with 2 tablespoons olive oil, remaining 4 pavé slices, and remaining 2 tablespoons butter.

- 1 garlic head, top cut off to expose cloves
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil, plus more for greasing pan
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt

1½ cups heavy cream
 2 Tbsp. fresh thyme leaves
 ¾ tsp. black pepper
 3¾ lb. sweet potatoes (about 6 medium potatoes), peeled
 ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
 Flaky sea salt, for sprinkling

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Drizzle garlic cloves with oil, and wrap garlic head in aluminum foil. Bake in preheated oven until cloves are very tender, about 45 minutes. Set aside.
2. Lightly grease a 9- x 5-inch loaf pan with olive oil and line with parchment paper, allowing 2 inches of overhang on both long sides. Place kosher salt and 5 roasted garlic cloves in a large bowl; using the back of a spoon, smash into a paste. Whisk in cream, thyme, and pepper. Set aside.

3. Using a mandoline, thinly slice potatoes lengthwise into ¼-inch-thick slices. Add sweet potatoes to cream mixture; toss gently to coat. Layer potato slices in bottom of prepared pan, slightly overlapping to create a shingled layer, trimming potato slices if needed. Continue layering, pressing occasionally, until potatoes are about ½ inch from top of pan. Discard remaining cream and potatoes.

4. Fold excess parchment over potatoes, and cover pan with aluminum foil. Bake at 350°F until potatoes are tender, about 2 hours. Remove foil from pan, leaving parchment in place. Let cool 2 hours at room temperature. Place a second 9- x 5-inch loaf pan on top of cooled pavé in pan, and weigh it down with unopened canned goods. Refrigerate 8 hours or overnight.

5. Carefully remove top pan and weights. Pour off any accumulated liquid around pavé. Invert pavé onto a cutting board; remove and discard parchment paper. Cut pavé crosswise into 8 slices. Place slices on a rimmed baking sheet, and refrigerate 20 minutes or up to 4 hours.

6. Preheat oven to 500°F with rack in upper third of oven. Brush pavé slices generously with melted butter, and arrange in a single layer on baking sheet. Bake until bottom edges are browned, 6 to 10 minutes. Invert pavé onto a serving platter, and sprinkle with flaky sea salt. Serve hot. —KRISTEN FARMER HALL

BOTTLE SERVICE

COCKTAIL HOUR

More and Merrier Whether for après-ski or après-caroling, it's time for crowd-pleasing, big-batch drinks.

By Caitlin A. Miller



Get into the holiday spirit with these Big-Batch Rye Sours (see p. 74 for the recipe).



THE HOLIDAYS ARE HERE, and so are guests, descending like a swarm of alarmingly merry bees. And they're thirsty, so you need something festive—stat. We asked our favorite bartenders for their best holiday-enhancing cocktails, with strings attached: no spirits over \$25, and they had to use the whole bottle in a batched drink that can be made ahead; bonus points for updating a recognizable classic with mass appeal. The results? Cocktails that are sure to please whoever shows up on your doorstep, carolers included. Just what you need to get your guests through the season—or off the slopes.

Spiced Maple Gimlets

TOTAL 5 MIN; SERVES 15

Refresh weary travelers and skiers alike with this gin drink for whiskey lovers. In it, woodsy maple syrup and star anise cozy up to juniper-laced Fords Gin.

- 1 (750-ml.) bottle juniper-forward gin (such as Fords)
- 1½ cup maple syrup
- 1 cup fresh lime juice
- 6 dashes Angostura bitters or ½ tsp. sarsaparilla
- 4 cups ice, plus more for serving
- 15 star anise, for garnish

Combine gin, maple syrup, lime juice, and bitters in a pitcher. Add 4 cups ice, and stir until ice is melted. Serve in rocks glasses over fresh ice; garnish with star anise. —PAUL FINN, GARAGE COCKTAIL BAR, AUSTIN

MAKE AHEAD Batched drink may be made one day ahead; keep chilled until ready to serve.

Big-Batch Rye Sours

PHOTO P. 73

ACTIVE 10 MIN; TOTAL 35 MIN
SERVES 15

Hibiscus syrup pairs with dry curaçao and lemon juice to brighten spicy Old Forester Rye whiskey.

- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup boiling water
- 1 Tbsp. dried hibiscus flowers
- 1 (750-ml.) bottle 100-proof rye whiskey (such as Old Forester)
- 2 cups dry curaçao
- 1½ cups fresh lemon juice
- 4 cups ice
- Lemon peel strips, for garnish

1. Combine sugar, ¼ cup boiling water, and hibiscus in a heatproof mug. Stir until sugar is dissolved; let stand until cooled. Cover and chill hibiscus syrup until ready to use.

2. Combine rye, dry curaçao, lemon juice, and ½ cup hibiscus syrup in a pitcher. Add ice, and stir until ice is melted. Serve chilled; garnish with lemon peel strips. —SOTHER TEAGUE, AMOR Y AMARGO, NEW YORK CITY

MAKE AHEAD Batched drink may be made one day ahead; keep chilled until ready to serve.

I get that you may have selected a Rhône to pair with your braised short ribs. But if you don't also open the Montrachet I brought, at your next dinner party you're getting a Veuve Clicquot box full of rocks.

not opening the bottle of wine I brought to your dinner party. Supposedly, there's an etiquette rule that you do not have to open a guest's wine. This makes sense if you want to build a society without dinner parties. I brought that wine so there's at least one thing I'll enjoy that night. Where does a host's right to suspend gift habeas corpus end? If I bring a box of cookies, are you allowed to wait until everyone leaves and eat them all in bed? If I wanted you to enjoy the wine later, I would have put it in one of those little bags with a bow and a note about Kristin's friend's anniversary. I get that you may have carefully selected a Rhône to pair with your braised short ribs. But if you don't also open the Montrachet I brought before the entree, at your next dinner party you're getting a Veuve Clicquot box full of rocks.

I'm in no way saying you should go to your next Christmas party with a vase or a candle or one of those pillows that you put on a bed and then take off a bed so you can use the real pillows underneath. Just put a little bit of time into your liquor purchase so the gift is personal.

If I need to spell it out further: Buy me the Grande Dame.

Joel Stein is the author of the recently published *In Defense of Elitism: Why I'm Better Than You and You Are Better Than Someone Who Didn't Buy This Book*.

8 Wines Anyone Would be Happy to Get

WINES FROM SURPRISING PLACES

If you find a bottle from Poland, Switzerland, Michigan, Mexico, Israel, either the republic or state of Georgia—I'm interested. That's something I can't easily find and have never tried. It doesn't have to even be good. The most obvious version of this is Chateau Musar from Lebanon. I'm always excited about that.

A YEAR THAT MEANS SOMETHING

The year we met? The year we graduated college together? The year we both had kids? A bottle with meaning is a really nice gift.

A BOTTLE FROM A PLACE YOU TRAVELED

I like to be bored with your stories about wine.

SHERRY

All sherry is good sherry.

VERY OLD RIOJA

Old Rioja vintages are no more expensive than Veuve Clicquot but do take some work to find. Very old anything is interesting to me. It can even be from an off-year of Bordeaux. You can buy those online at auctions pretty quickly, but it does take some planning—which is what makes it a good gift.

DESSERT WINES

No one buys dessert wines for themselves. Port, Madeira, Sauternes, Canadian ice wine—it's all fun.

OVERSIZE BOTTLES

Magnums are nice. But 3-liter bottles are super-fun. Even cheap ones.

SEGURA VIUDAS

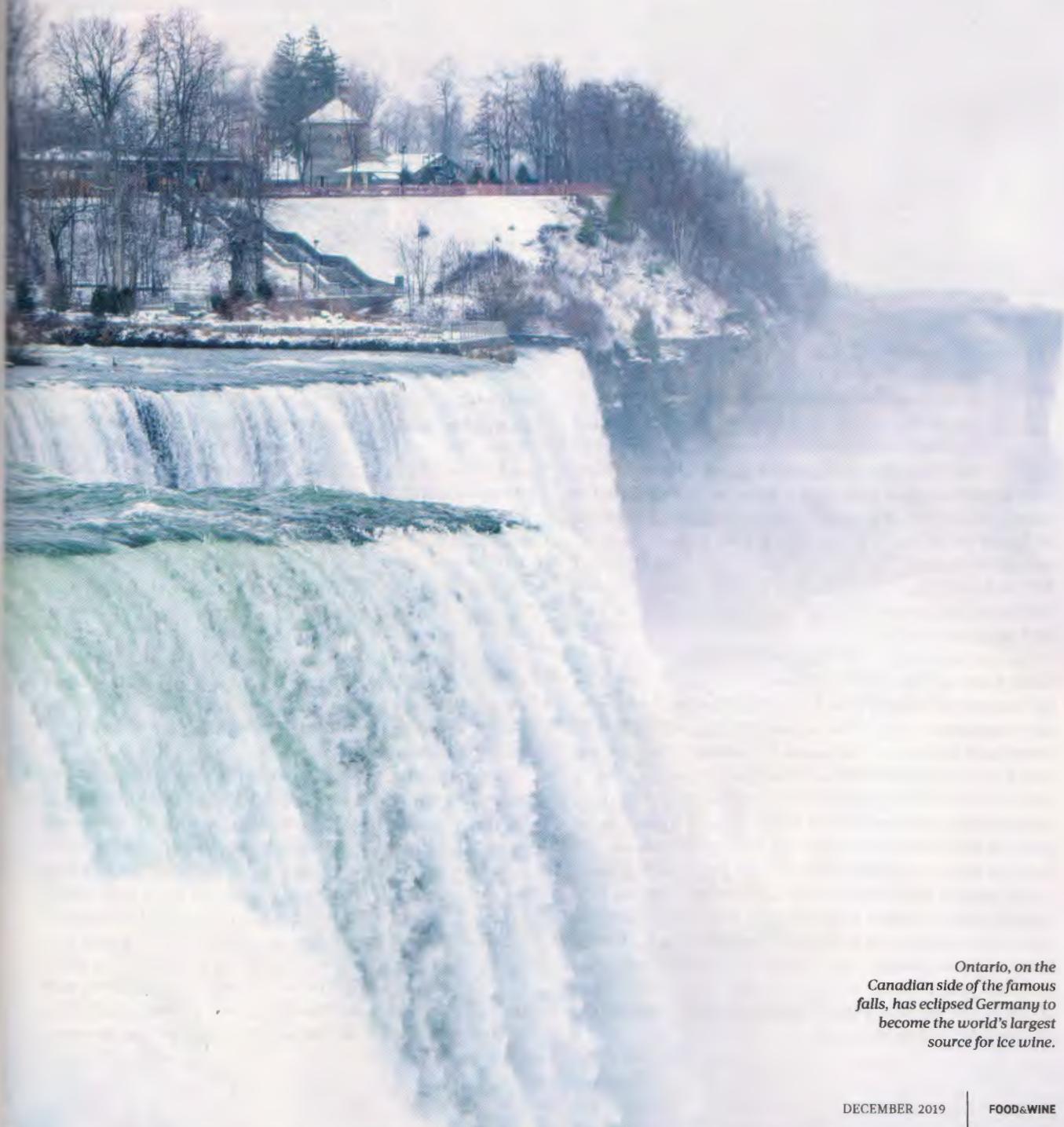
RESERVA HEREDAD CAVA
My wife and I like this Cava in part because it has all this metal hanging from the bottle. It tastes good, too.

TRAVEL

WINE FLIGHT

Falling for Niagara

Winter is prime time for ice wine in Ontario. By Roger Morris



Ontario, on the Canadian side of the famous falls, has eclipsed Germany to become the world's largest source for ice wine.

A freeze intensifies the grapes' sweetness; festivalgoers stay warm while sipping.



I IS A FREEZING JANUARY EVENING OUTSIDE, but inside the Jackson-Triggs winery, near the picture-book Ontario town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, there is the warm glow of Canadian hospitality. Winery chef Tim Mackiddie (who has since been succeeded by chef Kayla Mudford) grates a cascade of brown flakes from a frozen foie gras torchon onto bite-size chunks of chilled Atlantic lobster that are skewered on small grapevine skewers. He hands one to me. "I've seasoned it with some yuzu citrus and spicy togarashi," he says, as I take a bite. A sip of chilled 2017 Jackson-Triggs Grand Reserve Riesling Icewine follows. The flavors and textures all merge into a lovely mélange of fruit, acid, heat, and sweetness.

The next morning, under a snow-threatening sky, I reach through bird netting to pick a cluster of Vidal grapes that's been left hanging for months in an Inniskillin vineyard, waiting for the temperature to dip to the required 17°F (or even colder) to freeze them for harvest. The grapes are cold and shriveled and oozing with juice, like mushy ice to the touch. Nearby, a group of winery hands battle the frigid temperatures as they dump tons of harvested grapes into outdoor basket presses, squeezing out their last drops of nectar. Though it's January, these wines will bear last year's vintage date—the year the grapes were grown.

I am here for the Niagara-on-the-Lake Icewine Festival, held annually during January on the Niagara Peninsula, which juts out on the Canadian side toward the famous twin falls. With its fancy ball, snow-filled street tastings, and sophisticated wine and food pairing events featuring dozens of wineries—some of which have dedicated chefs—the festival draws hundreds of visitors from around the world.

Although ice wine originated in Germany (where it's spelled *eiswein*), Ontario is today the largest and arguably best-known producer of this prized sweet wine. During the 1970s, a small group of German and Austrian winemakers immigrated to the region, and one of them, Karl Kaiser, produced Inniskillin's first commercial ice wine in 1984 (it would have been 1983, but birds ate his first crop; he started putting nets over his ripe grapes after that). Today, as members of the region's Vintners Quality Alliance, most Niagara wineries make both table and ice wines.

The winter-hardy Vidal hybrid is the favored grape, although Riesling and Gewürztraminer ice wines are widely produced. "But Vidal produces a purer ice wine," says Reif Estate winemaker Rob DiDomenico, "because Riesling more easily contracts botrytis [a fungus necessary to production of dessert-style Sauternes and Tokaji wines], which changes the flavor profile of ice wine." In recent years, a light red wine made from frozen Cabernet Franc grapes has added a delightful option for Ontario winemakers as well as wine lovers.

Generally, ice wine is bottled immediately after fermentation, although some reserves may spend time aging in neutral oak barrels. "I often substitute Canadian ice wine for Sauternes when the restaurant is serving foie gras," says Adam Petronzio, wine director at Porter House Bar and Grill in New York City. "Ice wine has higher acidity and is generally lower in alcohol."

I take the short walk from my hotel to the final weekend of the festival's Icewine Village, an outdoor tasting staged in a cluster of white tents surrounding the town's clock tower. There, I join other well-bundled ice wine lovers as we make our way through a maze of snow from tent to tent, glasses in hand. (For information on the 2020 festival, visit niagaraonthelake.com.)



The Prince of Wales Hotel, originally built in 1864

WHERE TO TASTE

Ice wines from most of these wineries, as well as from other Ontario producers, are available in the United States. All are located within a few minutes' drive of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

INNISKILLIN

Local lore has it that Inniskillin's Brae Burn vineyard barn, a 1920s structure that was an early home to the pioneering winery and now houses its tasting room, was a design knockoff of the Frank Lloyd Wright houses being built locally at the time. Look for the similarities, and be sure to sample Inniskillin's sparkling ice wine, first made in 2000 in celebration of the new century. (inniskillin.com)

JACKSON-TRIGGS

A visit to Inniskillin's more modern sister winery can be a destination adventure. All year round, experience its elegant "Savour the Sights," a five-course progressive dinner served at various spots around the facility. In summer, Jackson-Triggs' under-the-stars amphitheater is home to the Summer Concert Series. (jacksontriggswinery.com)

REIF ESTATE

The Reif family's winegrowing history dates back to Germany's Rhine Valley, and they've been growing grapes in Canada since 1977. Stop in to test your senses with a blind wine tasting (\$20), then enjoy a plate of cheese and charcuterie from local purveyors. (reifwinery.com)

STRATUS

It's easy to forget that the Niagara region also makes excellent table wines. At Stratus, taste director Charles Baker's eponymous line of elegant hillside Rieslings before going sweet. And if you have time to tour only one winery, schedule a walkthrough of Stratus' modern interpretation of a gravity-flow facility. (stratuswines.com)

TWO SISTERS

You might think you're in Napa Valley as you approach this ornate, Italianate winery. Inside, the wines are superb, and the service in the tasting room is top notch. The winery also houses Kitchen 76, a spiffy bistro with a modern menu open for both lunch and dinner. (twosistersvineyards.com)

WHERE TO STAY

There are a half-dozen modern small hotels and a plethora of bed-and-breakfasts in Niagara-on-the-Lake. **The Shaw Club**, a hotel with high-level amenities and the popular Zees Grill, sits opposite the Shaw Festival Theatre, headquarters for Niagara-on-the-Lake's other main attraction, an annual extravaganza of plays performed in honor of Irish playwright Bernard Shaw (*rooms from \$189; shawclub.com*). Other hotels convenient to Queen Street shopping are the **Prince of Wales**, a lively Victorian-era venue with a lavishly decorated lobby (*rooms from \$199; vintage-hotels.com/princeofwales*), and the country club-like **Queen's Landing**, with its formal Tiara restaurant (*rooms from \$199; vintage-hotels.com/queenslanding*).



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Matzo ball soup at Perly's in Richmond, Virginia; rugelach at The General Muir in Atlanta; Liebman's Deli in the Bronx



ROAD TRIP

The Deli Ain't Dead

Delicatessen culture keeps evolving in new and delicious ways. Here are the stalwarts and the upstarts worth traveling for.

By David Lansel

WE'VE BEEN HEARING ABOUT the decline of the deli for the longest time. About how we're losing too many of our originals and how too many people are turning away from the delicatessen's simple pleasures. Many folks are bumming hard that so many of the greats are gone, like New York's legendary Carnegie Deli and Ben's Best across the East River in Queens, Wolfie Cohen's Rascal House in South Florida, not to mention the news earlier this year that Nate'n Al in Beverly Hills had closed, if only temporarily.

While losing a classic is a sad thing, if we set aside the obsession with Jewish deli culture needing to exist within a certain kind of framework, and we take a look around and see how things are changing, possibly for the better, it is difficult to not feel the tiniest bit of excitement.

A new generation of pastrami kings are taking the protein beyond the deli, like the exemplary Ugly Drum in Los Angeles,

which has proved that you don't even need a roof or walls to become a favored barbecue destination. There are other encouraging trends, too: Montreal deli culture has successfully found a footing south of the border, while in the Midwest, thanks in part to a resurgence in interest in classic Detroit food traditions, some of the old corned beef haunts are—happily—back on the grid.

Then, of course, you have all of the modern delis, a trend that shows no sign of slowing. So what if the new arrivals don't always adhere to certain expectations? So what if they're taking liberties, serving things you have a snowball's chance in hell of finding on the menu at the old-school holdouts, like bacon (gasp!) or kimchi (the audacity!)?

What matters is this: The deli is not dead. It's alive, it's evolving, and it's growing, right alongside the rest of American food culture. As long as there's pastrami or corned beef on the menu, maybe a little chopped liver, and definitely some good pickles, we're into it, and we're there.



THE UPSTARTS

CALL YOUR MOTHER, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Proudly referring to itself as a "Jew-ish" deli, Call Your Mother has converts from all over, even New York, for its pastrami served on a breakfast sandwich, in a cheesesteak, and in tacos on housemade tortillas. We're hard-pressed to think of an establishment breaking the rules quite so enthusiastically, with such entertaining results. (callyourmotherdeli.com)

FRANKEL'S DELICATESSEN, BROOKLYN

Perhaps the most visible of the new-school pastrami pushers in NYC, this Greenpoint spot dispels the notion that a modern deli might not thrive in a city still clinging to the old ways. Your elders might find the breakfast sandwiches slightly horrifying, but never mind—the smoky pastrami, egg, and cheese on a challah roll is currently one of New York's most distinctive morning meals-on-the-go. (frankelsdelicatessen.com)

THE GENERAL MUIR, ATLANTA

In a part of the country best associated with other kinds of delicious food, this establishment has thrived and become one of Atlanta's best restaurants. You can get great cured meats, housemade bagels, latkes, and chopped liver; don't

neglect the morning offerings, when generous smoked fish platters are a common sight throughout the dining room. (thegeneralmuir.com)

PERLY'S, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

A classic downtown lunch room with a proper deli heritage, Perly's has been revived in a grand manner by a local restaurateur who fell in love with the Art Deco-style storefront. Today, you'll find not a finer matzo ball soup for miles around, and the menu, while extremely ambitious, contains many well-executed staples alongside some unexpected (and welcome) surprises. Try the Jewbano, a Cuban-style sandwich made with brisket, tongue, house-pickled zucchini, dill-spiked Havarti cheese, pepper relish, and yellow mustard. (perlysrichmond.com)

RYE SOCIETY, DENVER

Jerrod Rosen's deli has been a presence in Denver's RiNo neighborhood for just over a year, but this is already one of those places where you can't help but feel like you're in good hands. The Rosen family goes back four generations, some of them players in Denver's very early deli scene. The matzo balls come from a family recipe, as does the rugelach. (ryesociety.com)

THE STALWARTS

LANGER'S DELICATESSEN-RESTAURANT, LOS ANGELES

This is not only America's finest Jewish deli, it is also one of its most essential restaurants. Langer's draws in all sorts for two simple reasons: the pastrami, considered to be some of the finest in the land; and the rye bread it's served on, which too many New York delis can only dream of. Both products are made off-site to the Langer family's specifications, finished on premises, and sliced to order.

Bring It Home: Langer's ships nationally through Goldbelly, including their famous #19 sandwich. (langersdeli.com)

LIEBMAN'S DELI, THE BRONX

Far away from Katz's and the other Manhattan delis that have been lavished with attention, you'll find this family-owned classic dating back more than 50 years. The pastrami here is among New York's finest, and the menu is a beautifully classic read, filled with everything you're looking for and likely some things you'd forgotten about or don't see every day, like kasha varnishkes, stuffed peppers, and beef flanken in the pot. (liebmansdeli.com)

ZINGERMAN'S DELI, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

Founders Ari Weinzweig and Paul Saginaw built an empire that now includes cheesemaking, bread baking, and coffee roasting—if you can eat it or drink it, Zingerman's is most likely doing it. You could dedicate an entire day or two to sampling your way through their different shops and unique offerings, and you really ought to. It's a tightly curated

selection of good things from everywhere complemented by one of the Midwest's best deli menus, offering everything you'd expect (pastrami sandwiches, matzo ball soup, chopped liver) and lots more you might not (latke tots and the top-selling macaroni and cheese). (zingermansdeli.com)

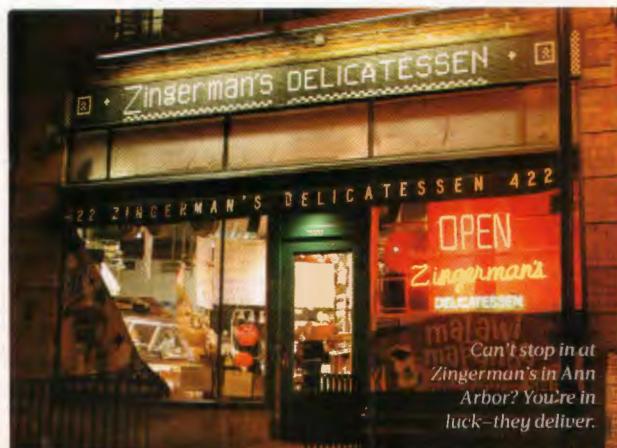
Bring It Home: You can ship baked goods, bread, and cheese made in-house all over the country. (zingermans.com)

SHAPIRO'S, INDIANAPOLIS

At the heart of Indiana's largest city for over a century, Shapiro's is one of those rare establishments managing to effortlessly transcend both genre and location. From top-notch pastrami to delicious brisket to the roasted, never frozen, hormone-free chickens, the food at Shapiro's is honest and good quality. Make sure you try the peppered beef—salted, washed, cured, peppered, smoked, and then dusted with a hint of a paprika-sugar blend. (shapiro's.com)

ATTMAN'S, BALTIMORE

There isn't much left of Charm City's famed Corned Beef Row. But there's enough to draw lines of cars down to Atman's, which has been here since 1915 and remains family-owned. The menu is as near-ancient as the deli itself, containing everything from coddies to kishkes. Don't rush in and out of here—sit with the whole experience for a while, and let the absence of anything terribly modern soothe you. (attmansdeli.com)



How We actually Holiday

OUR SECRET TO A GREAT HOLIDAY? CLICHÉ BUT TRUE: KEEP IT SIMPLE. TAP INTO OUR EDITORS' FAVORITE WAYS TO CELEBRATE, WITH UPDATED CLASSICS THAT BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER. HAPPY HOLIDAYS, FROM OUR TABLES TO YOURS.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN WALKER
STYLING BY CLAIRE SPOLEN
LETTERING BY MARTA CERDÀ





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Retro-Snacktive

STORE-BOUGHT SHORTCUTS
AND GOURMET HACKS
BRING NOSTALGIC SPREADS
TOGETHER IN MINUTES.

PUNCH LINE

EVERY CHRISTMAS OF MY CHILDHOOD, WE'D MAKE THE SEVEN-HOUR trek from Birmingham, Alabama, to Ville Platte, Louisiana, where my mom's family—numerous and very Cajun—would gather for a big holiday party, complete with rabbit gumbo, a hulking turducken, chicken and sausage jambalaya, and a platter of chocolate-peanut haystacks. I was responsible for the punch. I'd turn a container of lime sherbet out into the big glass bowl, pour in two liters of 7UP, and marvel as lemon-lime clouds bubbled up to create the creamy, vividly green drink that my brother and I would stand around until all that was left was a layer of foam.

The first recipe for 7UP punch appeared in a 7UP recipe booklet in 1953 (only three years after the company removed lithium as an ingredient). It calls for just 2 quarts of sherbet and 24 bottles of 7UP. "So pure, so good, so wholesome," the recipe extols. It fell out of fashion as cocktail culture ignited in the '50s, but many people I queried grew up with it at family parties and other gatherings. This holiday season, inspired by those fun (if not so wholesome) flavors, you'll find me next to the punch bowl with its more sophisticated, adult cousin, Citrus-Champagne Punch (recipe at right). *Laissez les bon temps rouler!* —ERIN CLYBURN, COPY EDITOR

FOOD STYLING: CYD DRAFTUS MCDOWELL; CHAIR AND SIDE TABLE (PREVIOUS PAGES) ART GALLERY 7930.COM/DESIGNSUPPLY

CITRUS-CHAMPAGNE PUNCH

ACTIVE 20 MIN; TOTAL 30 MIN. PLUS 5 HR FREEZING
SERVES 12

Let 2 pints **lemon sorbet** stand at room temperature 10 minutes. Thinly slice 2 **lemons** and 2 **limes**; artfully arrange in a small metal tube pan. Top with sorbet, packing citrus slices against sides of pan and smoothing top. Cover with plastic wrap; freeze until solid, about 5 hours (can be made 1 week ahead). To serve, pour 2 cups **gin** into a large, chilled punch bowl; stir in 1 more pint softened **lemon sorbet**. Add citrus ring to bowl. Pour 2 bottles **Champagne** into bowl; stir gently to combine. Garnish with **maraschino cherries**, if desired.

Make a splash with
a Waterford Lismore
Diamond Encore
punch bowl. (\$450,
waterford.com)





For pigs in a blanket,
grab a good store-
bought brand (we love
Nathan's) and pair with
the highest-quality
mustard you can find.



PARTY TRICKS

MAKING AN IMPRESSION WITH DELICIOUS APPETIZERS DOESN'T NEED TO BE complicated, nor should it break the bank. When we were researching our exposé about the catering business, we catered extravagant galas, serving six to eight canapés, each requiring upward of six elements to assemble (think smoked Maldon salt and micro-basil). But the most valuable tip came from a salesman for a boutique caterer, who told us that whether a wedding had a budget of \$100,000 or \$1 million, he always sold pigs in a blanket. People love them. Another hot tip? Don't be afraid of leaning on store-bought shortcuts like phyllo cups for a retro party spread—they're a cinch to bake ahead of time and top with your favorite fillings just before guests pop in. —MATT AND TED LEE, **AUTHORS OF HOTBOX: INSIDE CATERING, THE FOOD WORLD'S RISKIEST BUSINESS**

This three-tier
Litton Lane cake
stand elevates a DIY
shrimp cocktail. (\$105,
homedepot.com)

Pile steamed shrimp
on ice and serve with
cocktail sauce spiked
with gochujang or
extra horseradish.

Smoked almonds
instantly elevate your
cheese ball game with
their savory, flavor-
packed crunch.

A mixture of goat cheese,
good butter, and ricotta hides
a surprise dollop of tart jam
tucked into prebaked phyllo
cups in this twist on one of
the Lee brothers' favorite
throwback appetizers.

PICKLED PEPPER CHEESE BALL

ACTIVE 10 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 10
MIN; SERVES 10
Stir together 8 oz. softened
cream cheese, 1 cup shred-
ded aged sharp cheddar
cheese, 1 cup shredded mild
cheddar cheese, 1/2 cup diced

pickled Peppadew peppers,
and 1/4 tsp. **cayenne pepper**
in a medium bowl. Form mix-
ture into 2 balls; roll each ball
in a mixture of 3/4 cup finely
chopped **smoked almonds** and
1/4 cup chopped **fresh chives** to
coat. Cover with plastic wrap,
and refrigerate 1 hour or up to 1
day. Serve with **crackers**.

CHEESE CROUSTADES

TOTAL 25 MIN; SERVES 15
Bake 24 store-bought **phyllo cups**
according to package directions; let
cool on a wire rack. Stir together
8 oz. softened **goat cheese**, 4 oz.
softened **salted European-style
butter**, 4 oz. **whole-milk ricotta**, 1
tsp. **lemon zest**, 1/2 tsp. **herbes de**

Provence, 1/4 tsp. **white pepper**,
and a pinch of **sea salt** in a
medium bowl. Spoon mixture
into a pastry bag fitted with a
star tip. Dollop 1/4 tsp. **cranberry**
or **currant jam** into each **phyllo**
cup; pipe cheese mixture on top
of jam in **phyllo** cups. Garnish
with **chive** batons and **lemon**
zest curls.

MOM DIPS 2.0

MY FAVORITE PART OF THE HOLIDAY MEAL IS at the beginning, when my brother-in-law is shaking up drinks and I'm finishing carving the ham and laying the roasted salmon on a platter for the buffet my big family devours. That's when everyone is arriving, and that's when the dips come out: my cousin's tortilla dip, with salsa and gooey melted cheese; the zesty dip for crudités my aunt makes, a simple mustard-and-mayo blend spiked with curry powder; my sister's creamy bread-bowl concoction chock-full of water chestnuts and seasoned with vegetable soup mix. I love them all. I love digging into the layers of onion, chopped egg, and sour cream beneath the surface of briny roe on my grandmother's caviar dip. I love scooping up molten mouthfuls of spinach-artichoke dip. I adore the luscious, dairy-fat charisma of these bowls that kick-start the holiday meal.

But there's one dip in my repertoire that wasn't just for special occasions; it was an everyday dinner in my childhood home. Amid the pizza and Chinese takeout my mother often fed us, from time to time there'd be a real treat: a bowl of clam dip that my mother whipped up for us to excavate with potato chips. She's never been big on cooking, my mom, but she is very big on love. With the luxe version I dreamed up—with shallots, Worcestershire sauce, and crème fraîche—I hope I can show that I'm big on both. (Dip into my family's favorite recipes, at right.) —BETSY ANDREWS, CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Source sustainable caviar from Passmore Ranch. (\$84 for a 30-gram jar, passmoreranch.com)



FOUR-LAYER CAVIAR DIP

ACTIVE 15 MIN; TOTAL 2 HR 15 MIN; SERVES 12

Lightly grease a 6-inch ring mold with **cooking spray**. Stir together 6 large chopped **hard-cooked eggs**, 2 Tbsp. **sour cream**, 2 Tbsp. **mayonnaise**, and 1/2 tsp. **salt** in a medium bowl. Spoon egg mixture evenly on bottom of prepared ring mold. Top evenly with 1 cup rinsed and dried finely chopped **red onion**. Stir together 8 oz. softened **cream cheese** and 1/3 cup thinly sliced **fresh chives** in a bowl, and gently spread over onion; top with 2 oz. **black caviar**. Refrigerate 2 hours. Unmold onto a serving plate or platter, and serve with **crackers**.





WARM SPINACH-ARTICHOKE DIP

**ACTIVE 10 MIN; TOTAL 40 MIN
SERVES 10**
Preheat oven to 400°. Stir together 6 oz. softened **cream cheese**, 1 cup thawed and drained **frozen spinach**, 3/4 cup thawed **frozen artichoke hearts**, 3/4 cup grated **Gouda**, 1/2 cup **mozzarella**, 1/4 cup chopped **scallions**, 1/4 cup **mayonnaise**, 1 tsp. finely chopped **garlic**, 1/2 tsp. **salt**, and 1/4 tsp. **cayenne pepper** in a medium bowl until smooth. Spoon into a 1-quart baking dish; sprinkle top evenly with 1/4 cup **Parmesan**. Bake in preheated oven until browned and bubbly, about 25 minutes. Serve with **crostini** or **tortilla chips**.

FANCY CLAM DIP

ACTIVE 10 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 10 MIN; SERVES 6
Drain 2 (6.5-oz.) cans **clams**, (we like Bar Harbor brand) reserving clam liquor. Stir together clams and 4 oz. softened **cream cheese** in a medium bowl until smooth. Gently stir in 1/2 cup **crème fraîche**, 1 1/2 Tbsp. grated **shallot**, 1 tsp. **lemon zest**, 1 Tbsp. **lemon juice**, 1 tsp. **Worcestershire sauce**, and 1/2 tsp. **kosher salt**. Stir in 1 tsp. reserved clam liquor. Refrigerate at least 1 hour or up to 8 hours. Garnish with **hot sauce** and **dill**; serve with **potato chips**.

Holiday Heroes

OUR FAVORITE FAMILY RECIPES AND
NEVER-FAIL CROWD-PLEASERS, FROM A
CHEF'S-DAY-OFF HOT POT TO A DECADENT
LOBSTER FEAST, ARE HOLIDAY GOLD.

SALMON FIT FOR A KING

AS YOUNG ACTORS IN NEW YORK IN THE EARLY '80S, MY THEN-BOYFRIEND (NOW HUSBAND) AND I couldn't afford to give presents, so instead we would invite friends over to our one-bedroom apartment for elaborate 10-course meals. The portions were tiny, but I cooked my heart out. We served wines we'd been given as tips from various catering jobs. The women wore their best gowns, the men were in jackets and ties, and everyone brought extra silverware or plates ... even chairs! I always included a few recipes from *Food & Wine*, where I have worked off and on for 38 years: editor W. Peter Prescott's shredded brussels sprouts sautéed with beef stock and heavy cream (December 1984); Bob Chambers' Chocolate Shortbread Hearts (February 1988); the roasted salmon with Pinot Noir sauce from the Hotel Sorrento, suffused with tarragon, fennel, and thyme (May 1987). It was a way we could say "I love you" to our best friends, and it's now a tradition we remember with joy. —DAVID MCCANN, FORMER TEST KITCHEN ASSISTANT AND ACTOR

RECIPE P. 111



The 2017 Averaen Willamette Valley Pinot Noir is as great to sip as it is in sauce. (\$20)



BLACK FRIDAY STEW

EVERY YEAR, I MAKE VENISON STEW FOR ABOUT 30 PEOPLE the day after Thanksgiving. It's become a time-honored tradition, if 15 or 20 years of doing so counts as time-honored. I am able to do this because my uncle-in-law is basically a WASP banker with strong good ol' boy tendencies, and he spends much of his free time shooting things; the trailer hitch of his SUV is a brass plate that looks like the end of a 10-gauge shotgun shell. Last year, on the day I was actually making the stew, I ran out to get gas for my car, and the local deer community decided to

exact retribution for all those years of stewing up their relatives with juniper berries, mushrooms, onions, and so on. (Evidently deer do not have a sense of humor when it comes to being turned into stew.) The deer chosen for the honor did a kamikaze bolt into the front driver's side of my car, destroying the car (and itself) but failing to kill me in the process. Ha! Nice try. I went back, finished up the stew, served it to everyone, and headed out the next day to look for a new car. Take that, you furry bastards.
—RAY ISLE, EXECUTIVE WINE EDITOR

RECIPE P. 125

WHEN I SPEND THE HOLIDAYS WITH MY FAMILY IN BOSTON, there are some constants: a fire in the fireplace, my dad's old-fashioned in a Spode Christmas tree glass, and a pan-roasted Maine lobster dinner. It's my simplified adaptation of a fancy restaurant dish: quartered lobster roasted in

butter, flambéed with bourbon or sherry, then drowned in chive beurre blanc with lobster roe. Restaurants prepare each lobster in its own skillet, but you get the same result—and easily feed a crowd—using a hot oven and a sheet pan. —MARY-FRANCES HECK, SENIOR FOOD EDITOR

Nonslip steel nut-and-seafood crackers make short work of lobster claws. (\$15, surlatable.com)



LOBSTER FOR A CROWD

ABOUT 12 YEARS AGO, JASON, my husband, who is Jewish, insisted on making me his three-ingredient brisket for Hanukkah. He lined a roasting pan with enormous sheets of heavy-duty foil, plopped a 5-pound brisket on top, then slathered it in a combination of Lipton onion soup mix and canned cranberry sauce. I remember looking on in dismay as he assembled this nightmare. When it was done braising, I was informed we wouldn't eat it until the next day—it was better if chilled overnight because he could then remove much of the fat, slice it easily, and reheat it in all the juices. As lowbrow as it seemed, it was, to my surprise, incredibly delicious. Now, after over a decade of cooking professionally and discovering some of the best recipes in the country, it is still our tradition to make this brisket for Hanukkah. My version's a little fancier, but the original is still close to my heart. —JUSTIN CHAPPLE, CULINARY DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

BEST-EVER BRISKET

RECIPE AT RIGHT

Cranberry-Onion Hanukkah Brisket

ACTIVE 40 MIN; TOTAL 5 HR 50 MIN, PLUS 8 HR REFRIGERATION; SERVES 8 TO 10

This nearly effortless brisket gets a festive red glaze from cranberries; their tart sweetness cuts through the savory onion soup mix and hearty brisket with ease. Rewarming the brisket yields incredibly tender meat that soaks up the concentrated sauce.

- 1½ lb. fresh or thawed frozen cranberries (about 8 cups)
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 1 (½-inch) lemon peel strip plus 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. plus a pinch of kosher salt, divided
- 1 tsp. plus a pinch of ground black pepper, divided
- 2 (2-oz.) envelopes onion soup and dip mix (such as Lipton Recipe Secrets)
- 1 (7-lb.) beef brisket, trimmed

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Combine cranberries, sugar, lemon peel strip and lemon juice, a pinch of salt, and a pinch of pepper in a medium saucepan. Cook over medium-high, stirring and crushing cranberries with a wooden spoon, until cranberries have broken down and mixture has thickened, 10 to 14 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in onion soup mix; let cool slightly, about 15 minutes.

2. Season brisket with remaining 2 tablespoons salt and remaining 1 teaspoon pepper. Layer 2 large sheets of heavy-duty aluminum foil in a large roasting pan, overlapping slightly to cover bottom of pan and letting foil extend 8 inches past both ends. Repeat with 2 additional sheets of foil placed crosswise (to form an "X"). Top with a sheet of parchment paper. Spread about a quarter of the cranberry sauce on center of parchment, and place brisket, fat side up, on top. Spread remaining cranberry sauce over top of brisket, top with another sheet of parchment, and wrap foil tightly around beef. Crimp to seal. Place roasting pan on a baking sheet, and braise brisket in preheated oven until fork-tender, 3 hours to 3 hours and 30 minutes. Uncover and let cool completely, about 1 hour and 30 minutes. Cover and refrigerate at least 8 hours or up to 2 days.

3. Preheat oven to 325°F. Uncover brisket, and discard any fat that has solidified on surface of brisket and pan drippings. Scrape off cranberry sauce, place in a bowl, and set aside. Transfer brisket to a carving board, and slice against the grain. Arrange brisket slices in an ovenproof serving dish, and spoon reserved cranberry sauce over top. Cover and bake in preheated oven until heated through, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

—JUSTIN CHAPPEL

MAKE AHEAD The unsliced braised brisket can be refrigerated up to 2 days. Slice and heat before serving.

WINE Rich, full-bodied Zinfandel: 2017 Limerick Lane Russian River

Herb-Roasted King Salmon with Pinot Noir Sauce

PHOTO P. 107

ACTIVE 50 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR
SERVES 10

Originally served at Seattle's Hotel Sorrento by chef David Pisegna (and included in The Best of Food & Wine collection from 1988), this throwback salmon dish stands the test of time. We simplified the original recipe but didn't change a thing about the velvety, wine-blushed beurre blanc; keep it warm and serve it immediately for the best results.

- 2 Tbsp. plus 4 tsp. vegetable oil, divided
- 2/3 cup coarsely chopped fresh wild mushrooms (about 2 1/4 oz.)
- 2 large shallots, chopped
- 1 cup Pinot Noir wine
- 10 tarragon sprigs, divided, plus fresh tarragon leaves, for garnish
- 10 thyme sprigs, divided
- 10 fennel frond sprigs, divided, plus chopped fennel fronds, for garnish
- 1 cup fish stock or bottled clam juice (such as Bar Harbor)
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1 cup unsalted butter (8 oz.), cut into ½-inch pieces, divided
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 ¾ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- ¾ tsp. black pepper, divided
- 1 (3½-lb.) skin-on salmon side (preferably king salmon), cut into 10 (5½-oz.) portions and patted dry with paper towels

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Heat 4 teaspoons oil in a medium saucepan over medium-high. Add mushrooms and shallots; cook, stirring often, until shallots are softened, about 3 minutes. Stir in wine, 2 tarragon sprigs, 2 thyme sprigs, and 2 fennel sprigs. Return mixture to a simmer over medium-high, and cook until wine is reduced by half, 4 to 5 minutes. Stir in stock and cream, and return to a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until reduced to about 2/3 cup, 18 to 22 minutes.

2. Remove sauce from heat, and gradually whisk in ½ cup butter. (You may need to return saucepan to heat briefly to melt butter; do not let mixture come to a simmer or sauce will break.) Pour sauce through a fine wire-mesh strainer into a small heatproof bowl; discard solids. Stir in lemon juice, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper; cover to keep warm.

3. Season tops of salmon fillets with remaining 1 ¼ teaspoons salt and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large nonstick or cast-iron skillet over medium-high. Add 5 salmon fillets, flesh sides down, and sear until lightly browned, about 1 minute. Flip fillets, and sear until skin is lightly browned, about 1 minute. Transfer cooked fillets, skin sides down, to an aluminum foil-lined rimmed baking sheet, spacing fillets ½ inch apart. Wipe skillet clean, and repeat process with remaining 1 tablespoon oil and remaining 5 salmon fillets.

4. Top fillets with remaining ½ cup cubed butter, remaining 8 tarragon sprigs, remaining 8 thyme sprigs, and remaining 8 fennel sprigs. Bake in preheated oven to desired degree of doneness, 6 to 8 minutes for medium.

5. Spoon about 2 tablespoons warm wine sauce onto each of 10 dinner plates. Using a spatula, carefully slide salmon fillets off their skins, leaving skins and herb sprigs on baking sheet. Pat bottoms of cooked fish with paper towels. Place fillets on sauce, skinned sides down. Garnish with tarragon leaves and fennel fronds, and serve immediately. —DAVID MCCANN AND DAVID PISEGNA, HOTEL SORRENTO, SEATTLE

WINE Complex, raspberry-scented Oregon Pinot Noir: 2017 Averaen Willamette Valley





A HOT POT HOLIDAY

AS A CHEF, I'VE SPENT A LOT OF HOLIDAYS IN restaurant kitchens. Only in the past few years have I had time to be home with my family. While they would love for me to cook for them, I'd rather relax than prepare a big dinner. Our compromise: We do hot pot. There is a small amount of prep to be done (cutting up vegetables, mainly), but using the butcher counters at the local Asian and Latin-markets really helps to get the meats prefabricated and done. We set up one big communal pot in the middle of the table on top of a burner and fill it with soup stock for cooking the raw meats and vegetables. We lay out a spread of raw mushrooms, cabbage, tofu, dumplings (a good frozen one is not a terrible thing to have around), daikon, shrimp, watercress, pea shoots, thinly sliced beef, pork, chicken, and basically anything else we can boil somewhat quickly and pick out of the pot. Everyone also gets a bowl to create their own dipping sauce, so they can pick their food straight out of the pot and dip it into their own customized sauce. I like mine with raw egg, scallions, cilantro, vinegar, garlic, sesame oil, and hot chile paste. Toward the end of the meal, we'll drop in some noodles to cook in the now-extra-flavored soup base so we can finish the meal with a bowl of noodles. —NICK WONG, CHEF DE CUISINE, UB PRESERV, HOUSTON

Throw a hot pot party anywhere with a Cal-Mil walnut induction cooktop. (\$280, katom.com)

RECIPES P. 126

Forever Cookies

FOR ONE EDITOR'S FAMILY, HOLIDAY BAKING UNITES THE GENERATIONS.

BY NINA FRIEND

MY PARENTS' KITCHEN IN CHICAGO ALWAYS SMELLS LIKE CHOCOLATE. THAT'S WHERE MY MOM can usually be found, wearing ripped jeans and a T-shirt piled with turquoise snake necklaces, caramelizing sugar or shaping dough as cookies bake in the oven.

My mom's love of cookies developed early. She grew up making mandel bread, an Eastern European cookie that's like a softer, sweeter, Jewish version of biscotti, with her grandmother. Eventually she taught me how to make it, too, studded with chocolate and sprinkled with cinnamon (recipe p. 128). She taught me how to make florentines and financiers, macaroons and macarons, stroopwafels and whoopie pies.

When I was 5, we learned that my youngest brother, Matthew, had an anaphylactic allergy to wheat. It was the late '90s, and gluten-free offerings at grocery stores consisted of sandy bread and rock-hard muffins. So my mom developed her own gluten-free versions of my family's favorite sweets—everything from Thin Mints to Oreo cookies. We loved the giant chocolate meringues from Charlie Trotter's takeaway spot, Trotter's To Go. Although they were gluten-free, the kitchen was full of cross-contamination. My mom begged the pastry



TRIPLE CHOCOLATE-PEPPERMINT COOKIES



CHOCOLATE CHUNK MANDEL BREAD

RECIPE P. 128

chef for the recipe (see p. 128) so she could make them at home.

When my mom wanted to bake cookies that weren't gluten-free, she made the dough in the garage, where we kept the wheat flour. Whether re-creating the chocolate delights she ate as a kid or cracking the secret ingredient in a friend's chocolate chip cookie, she made batch after batch until she got them right.

When I was in high school, my mom stayed up so late baking that it felt like she never slept. I'd annotate *The Great Gatsby* to the tune of pots banging and spoons stirring. For homework breaks I'd help crack eggs, but when I went to bed, well past midnight, chocolate would still be bubbling on the stove. The next day, I'd go to school with the previous night's experiments: Pop-Tarts for tennis practice, Mallomars for Model UN.

I started college as Matthew was being treated for his allergy, which allowed my mom to bake freely with wheat flour inside the house. She became obsessed with perfecting a new kind of cookie. This one was thick, chunky, and decadent, crispy on the outside, gooey on the inside. This was a Statement Cookie.

Oxford Street twinkled with Christmas lights when my

parents visited me in London, where I studied abroad in college. When my mom handed me a raffia-wrapped brown box sealed with a sticker that said "Big.Fat.Cookie.," I'm pretty sure I shrieked. Her hobby had blossomed into a business.

My mom now bakes out of a commercial kitchen, sells to restaurants across Chicago, and ships nationwide. She has built a local brand with a national following, and her team of eight helps execute the cookie-making process. (For her Triple Chocolate-Peppermint Cookie recipe, see p. 128.)

Though my mom's baking has gone from nightly ritual to daily task, it's still about connection—a way to feed the people she loves. For me, baking has increasingly become the opposite: a way to disconnect, especially during the holidays. I live in New York now, and trips home consist of quick, packed weekends. But in December, during that cushion of days made for doing nothing, I can be in the kitchen with my mom, poking holes for raspberry thumbprints, and I don't have to think about flight delays or deadlines. All that matters is that I don't overbeat the butter, that this batch doesn't burn.



GLUTEN-FREE CACAO NIB MERINGUES

RECIPE P. 128

Her Nonna's NOLA

AT GIANNA IN NEW ORLEANS, CHEF REBECCA WILCOMB
PAYS HOMAGE TO HER GRANDMOTHER'S COOKING WITH
AN ITALIAN-INSPIRED HOLIDAY MENU.

BY JULIA REED

THOUGH REBECCA WILCOMB OPENED GIANNA, the Italian restaurant that is the latest member of the Link Restaurant Group's burgeoning New Orleans empire, in April, she says she's been "doing research for it my entire life." Wilcomb grew up mostly in Massachusetts, but her mother is Italian—her parents met while her father was in the Army and stationed in Italy. Summers and holidays sometimes meant visits to the southern Veneto in the Po River delta to see her *nonna*, the grandmother for whom the restaurant is named. (Gianna is also Wilcomb's middle name.)

When the family gathered on Christmas Day, there was always tortellini in brodo, the traditional first course in northern Italian holiday feasts. "It's something that we all love," Wilcomb says of the pork-, beef-, and chicken-filled pasta parcels floating in a rich, clear broth, adding that even when the holidays were spent elsewhere, she, her mother, and her sister joined forces to make it. "It's never as good as my nonna's, but she's got a few years on us!" So five years ago, when Wilcomb began talking with partners Donald Link and



THE MENU

Babbo Natale Spritz

(TOP LEFT,
recipe p. 123)

Tortellini in Brodo

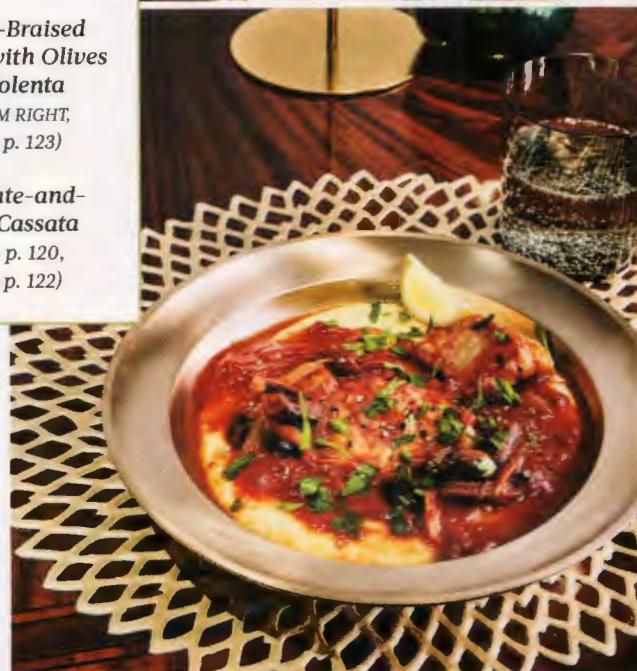
(TOP RIGHT,
recipe p. 123)

Tomato-Braised Baccalà with Olives and Polenta

(BOTTOM RIGHT,
recipe p. 123)

Chocolate-and- Citrus Cassata

(photo p. 120,
recipe p. 122)



Stephen Stryjewski about opening what would become Gianna, she knew the tortellini would be on the menu year-round. "Whenever I visit my grandmother, it's the first thing she makes for me." (See p. 123 for the recipe.)

Wilcomb, who won a James Beard Award for Best Chef: South while executive chef at the Link Group's flagship Herbsaint, spent long stretches of time in Italy before opening the new restaurant. She and her colleagues made trips as a group to Sicily and Rome and Campania. She worked in a pasta lab in Bologna and made repeat trips to her grandparents' house. Now that the restaurant is a reality, she is looking forward to sharing not just her expertise but also her family traditions during her first Christmas at Gianna. "Christmas is really big in Italy," she says, "And the celebrations last almost a month."

While the tortellini is the sacrosanct Christmas Day first course, it is usually followed, Wilcomb says, by a whole roasted bird. During the season, she plans to offer a similar festive family-style dinner at the restaurant, where duck will be roasted in the wood-burning oven. Baccalà, which was always her family's Christmas Eve main course, will be on the menu as well. Wilcomb braises the salt cod with tomatoes and olives—the strong, acidic flavors hold up well with the fish—and serves it over polenta (recipe on p. 123). A special dessert will be a chocolate cassata (see p. 120), the classic Sicilian cake featuring a liqueur-soaked sponge cake layered with sweetened ricotta and topped with candied fruit (in this case, lots of citrus).

The use of citrus in holiday feasts turns out to be a shared custom. "Italy and Louisiana have the same citrus season," Wilcomb says. "Different types of lemons are grown year-round in Italy, but the winter, especially around Christmastime, is orange season. Markets all over the country are filled with the many varieties grown in the South." At home, Wilcomb plans to

decorate with bowls of oranges; at the restaurant she will fill antique citrus crates with fruit from Louisiana.

The responsibilities that come with a new restaurant mean that Wilcomb will be staying in New Orleans during the holidays, but she hopes friends will gather to fill and twist the tortellini, which is always a group affair. The festivities will be aided by the Babbo Natale Spritz (recipe p. 123) created by Cary Palmer, the Link Group's beverage director. Named for Father Christmas, the drink is "a seasonal take on the classic Italian spritz," says Palmer. "The cranberry liqueur keeps things dry and tart, and the aperitivo has a backbone of baking spice that screams 'holidays.'" For her part, Wilcomb can't wait: "A big familial meal is so festive during the season. It's the Italian way."



CHOCOLATE-AND-CITRUS CASSATA

RECIPE P. 122

HOW TO MAKE IT

COOK
THE
COVER

This Chocolate-and-Citrus Cassata (see recipe on p. 122) is a stunner. With a bit of planning, the many delicious elements are easy to make and assemble. Here's how to do it.

GET A HEAD START

1. WEIGHT AND DRAIN THE RICOTTA

At least one day before you plan to make the cassata, spoon ricotta into a cheesecloth-lined colander set inside a bowl. Wrap cheesecloth over ricotta; place 2 or 3 canned goods in a small bowl, and set bowl on top of ricotta. (Weighting the ricotta extracts the most moisture.) Place in refrigerator; drain at least 24 hours or up to 3 days.

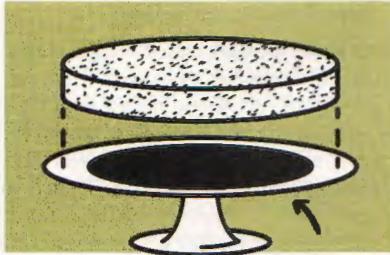
2. BAKE THE CAKE LAYERS

The cake layers may be baked up to one day before serving the cassata. Let the baked cake layers cool in pans on wire rack 10 minutes. Remove cakes from pans, and let cool to room temperature, about 1 hour. Immediately wrap each cake layer in plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to assemble the cassata.

3. MAKE THE PISTACHIO PRALINE

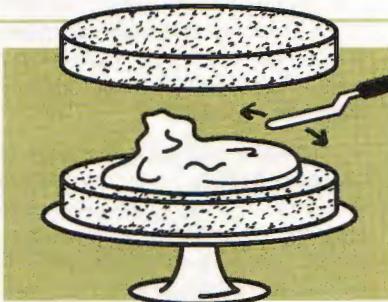
The pistachio praline may be made up to one week before serving the cassata, but it must be kept completely dry and stored in an airtight container. (This type of hard candy will start to get sticky and melt if it's refrigerated or stored in a humid kitchen.) Find a cool, dry spot to store the airtight container until ready to assemble the cassata.

ASSEMBLE THE CAKE!



1. GET SET UP

Place a 7 1/2-inch cake board (or cardboard round) on a cake turntable or overturned large dinner plate. (The cake board will be slightly smaller than the cake layers so the cake can be glazed evenly.) Place one cake layer on cake board.



2. FILL THE CAKE

Add half of the ricotta filling to the center of the cake layer. Using an offset spatula, spread the ricotta, pushing from the center to the edge of the cake and leaving a 1/2-inch border. Repeat with remaining cake layers and ricotta filling.



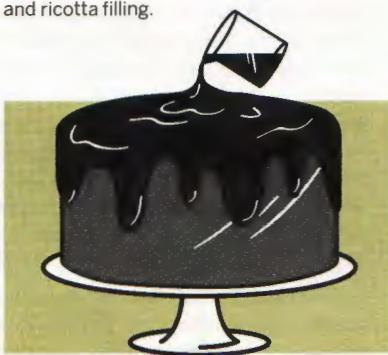
3. APPLY THE CRUMB COAT

Spread about 2 1/2 cups of the buttermilk-chocolate frosting in a thin layer over the top and sides of cake to secure crumbs, making sure to work frosting into gaps between layers to encase ricotta filling. Chill cake until frosting is firm to the touch.



4. FROST CAKE

Spread remaining buttermilk-chocolate frosting over the top and sides of the cake in an even layer. Using the edge of a bench scraper, smooth the frosting while rotating cake turntable. A smooth layer of frosting will ensure that the dark chocolate ganache glaze looks smooth and covers the cake evenly. Chill the assembled cake at least 2 hours and up to overnight.



5. GLAZE CAKE

Using two large spatulas, transfer chilled frosted cake to a wire rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. In a continuous motion starting from the middle of the cake, pour the glaze over the cake, ensuring it coats the top and sides. Pour in a speedy, controlled manner; the cold cake will harden the glaze quickly and may result in a rippled finish—rather than smooth—if poured too slowly.



6. GARNISH THE CAKE

Just before serving the cake, slice a mix of fresh citrus, such as clementines, blood oranges, and kumquats, into wedges or wheels, and blot dry. Use a channel knife to remove long strands of orange peel for twists. Remove glazed cake from refrigerator, and garnish with pistachio praline pieces, fresh citrus, orange peel twists, and candied citrus. Serve cake immediately.



Chocolate-and-Citrus Cassata

PHOTO P. 120

ACTIVE 1 HR 30 MIN; TOTAL 7 HR 25 MIN
SERVES 12

To decorate this spectacular holiday dessert, use an offset spatula, a bench scraper, and a cake turntable to spread the frosting evenly for the smoothest cake with straight sides. Prevent air bubbles from forming in the dark chocolate ganache glaze by using a spatula to stir the melting chocolate.

CAKE LAYERS

Cooking spray

- 2** cups all-purpose flour (about 8½ oz.)
- 2/3** cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1** tsp. baking soda
- 1** tsp. baking powder
- 1** tsp. fine sea salt
- 1½** cups packed dark brown sugar
- ½** cup unsalted butter (4 oz.), softened
- ½** cup mayonnaise
- 4** large eggs
- 2** tsp. vanilla extract
- 1¼** cups buttermilk

BUTTERMILK-CHOCOLATE FROSTING

- 6** oz. 100% cacao unsweetened chocolate, chopped (1½ cups)
- 3** oz. 60–65% cacao bittersweet chocolate, chopped (¾ cup)
- ¾** cup unsalted butter (6 oz.)
- 3** cups powdered sugar (about 12 oz.)
- ½** cup buttermilk
- ½** tsp. vanilla extract

PISTACHIO PRALINE

- 1** cup shelled raw pistachios
- 1** cup granulated sugar
- ¼** cup water

RICOTTA FILLING

- 32** oz. whole-milk ricotta cheese (such as Galbani), weighted and drained overnight (see "Get a Head Start," p. 121)
- ¾** cup powdered sugar (about 3 oz.)
- ½** tsp. orange zest
- ½** vanilla bean pod, split, seeds scraped

DARK CHOCOLATE GANACHE GLAZE

- 8** oz. 60–65% cacao bittersweet baking chocolate (such as Valrhona), chopped (about 1½ cups)
- 1** Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1¼** cups heavy cream
- 2** Tbsp. light corn syrup

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS

- Sliced fresh clementines and blood oranges, orange peel twists, and fresh or candied kumquats

1. Make the cake layers: Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease 3 (8-inch) round cake pans with cooking spray; line bottoms with parchment paper, and set aside. Sift together flour, cocoa, baking soda, and baking powder. Stir in salt.

2. Place brown sugar, butter, and mayonnaise in bowl of a heavy-duty stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment; beat on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating until fully incorporated after each addition. Stir in vanilla. With mixer running on low speed, add flour mixture alternately with buttermilk in 3 additions, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Beat until just incorporated after each addition. Divide batter evenly among prepared pans.

3. Bake in preheated oven until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 16 to 20 minutes. Let cakes cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes. Remove cakes from pans, and let cool completely on racks, about 1 hour.

4. While cakes cool, make the buttermilk-chocolate frosting: Bring 1 inch of water to a simmer in a medium saucepan over medium. Combine unsweetened chocolate, bittersweet chocolate, and butter in a medium-size heatproof bowl. Place bowl over simmering water, ensuring base of bowl does not touch simmering water. Cook, stirring often, until mixture is melted and smooth, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool slightly, 10 to 15 minutes.

5. Combine powdered sugar, buttermilk, and vanilla in bowl of a heavy-duty stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment; beat on low speed until smooth, about 1 minute. With mixer running on low speed, gradually add cooled chocolate mixture, beating until just incorporated, about 30 seconds. Set frosting aside, uncovered, and let stand, stirring occasionally, until completely cool, 1 to 2 hours. (Frosting should thicken as it cools. Do not chill.)

6. While buttermilk-chocolate frosting cools, make the pistachio praline: Place pistachios in a single layer centered on a parchment paper-lined rimmed baking sheet; set aside. Bring sugar and ¼ cup water to a boil in a small saucepan over medium-high. Cook, stirring often, until sugar dissolves, about 2 minutes. Cook, without stirring, until sugar turns amber in color and registers 350°F on a candy thermometer, 8 to 10 minutes. Pour caramel over pistachios (do not stir). Let cool completely, about 20 minutes. Transfer

hardened pistachio mixture to a cutting board; chop into pieces.

7. While praline cools, make the ricotta filling: Stir together ricotta, powdered sugar, orange zest, and vanilla bean seeds. (Mixture should be very thick and hold its shape when scooped.) Cover and chill until ready to use.

8. Assemble the cassata: Place 1 cake layer on a cake board. Spoon half of the ricotta filling (about 1½ cups) over top of cake layer, spreading to leave a ½-inch border around edges. Top with a second cake layer; spread remaining ricotta filling to leave a ½-inch border around edges. Top with remaining cake layer. Stir buttermilk-chocolate frosting until smooth; spread a thin layer (about 2½ cups) on top and sides of cake to seal in any crumbs and fill gaps between layers to encase filling. Chill cake, uncovered, until frosting is hardened, about 30 minutes. Spread top and sides of cake with a thick layer of remaining buttermilk-chocolate frosting, smoothing frosting with a bench scraper. Chill cake until frosting is firm and cold, at least 2 hours or up to overnight.

9. Make the dark chocolate ganache glaze: Combine bittersweet chocolate and butter in a 4-cup glass measuring cup with a spout; set aside. Bring cream and corn syrup to a low simmer in a small saucepan over medium-low. Pour cream mixture over chocolate mixture, and let stand 2 minutes. Stir glaze with a spatula until completely smooth; let stand at room temperature, stirring occasionally, until cooled to 100°F to 105°F, 4 to 10 minutes. (It should be pourable and fluid.)

10. Remove chilled cake from refrigerator, and place on a wire rack or inverted bowl inside a rimmed baking sheet. Pour glaze over top of cake, allowing glaze to flow down sides, making sure cake is completely covered. Let stand 1 minute, allowing excess glaze to drip off sides. Run an offset spatula around bottom edge of cake to remove any drips. Chill cake until glaze is set, about 1 hour. Carefully transfer cake to a cake stand or serving plate. Garnish with sliced clementines, other citrus, and desired amount of pistachio praline. (Reserve any remaining pistachio praline for another use.) Serve chilled.

—MAGGIE SCALES, LINK RESTAURANT GROUP, NEW ORLEANS

MAKE AHEAD Ricotta must be drained at least 24 and up to 72 hours ahead. Cake layers may be baked 1 day ahead, individually wrapped in plastic, and chilled. Pistachio praline may be made up to 1 week ahead and stored in an airtight container. Unglazed frosted cake may be assembled and chilled overnight.



Babbo Natale Spritz

PHOTO P. 119

TOTAL 5 MIN; SERVES 1

A wintry take on a classic spritz, this cocktail is dry and tart from the cranberry liqueur with a layer of warming spice from the Contratto Aperitif.

- ½ cup (4 oz.) Prosecco (preferably dry, such as Bisol Crede)**
- 1 Tbsp. (½ oz.) cranberry liqueur (such as Clear Creek)**
- 1 Tbsp. (½ oz.) Contratto Aperitif or Campari**
- 1 rosemary sprig, for garnish**

Stir together Prosecco, cranberry liqueur, and Contratto in a small wine glass. Fill with ice, and garnish with rosemary sprig.
—CARY PALMER, LINK RESTAURANT GROUP, NEW ORLEANS

Tortellini in Brodo

PHOTO P. 119

ACTIVE 1 HR 30 MIN; TOTAL 3 HR
SERVES 6

Enlist help from your guests to fill and shape these tortellini. Looking for another shortcut? Use 112 square wonton wrappers instead of making the fresh pasta, trimming into 2-inch squares, if necessary. Then simply follow the instructions for filling and shaping the tortellini. When boiling the filled tortellini, decrease cook time to 4 to 5 minutes.

FILLING

- 6 cups water, plus more for brushing**
- 1 (6-oz.) bone-in, skin-on chicken thigh**
- 1 small carrot, cut into thirds**
- 1 small celery stalk, cut into thirds**
- 3 oz. skinless uncured pork belly, cut into ½-inch pieces**
- 2 oz. boneless beef chuck roast, cut into ½-inch pieces**
- 3½ oz. Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated with a Microplane grater (about 2¼ cups), divided**
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt**
- ½ tsp. freshly ground whole nutmeg**
- 1 large egg, beaten**

TORTELLINI

- 1 lb. 00 flour (about 4 cups), plus more for sprinkling**
- 4 large eggs**
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENT

- 8 cups chicken bone broth (such as Brodo brand)**

1. Make the filling: Combine 6 cups water, chicken thigh, carrot, and celery in a large saucepan. Bring to a low simmer (150°F to 160°F) over medium-low, and cook 10 minutes. Add pork and beef. Cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted into thickest part of chicken registers 165°F, about 5 minutes. Remove meat from pan, and let stand until cool, about 15 minutes. Discard poaching liquid and vegetables.

2. Pick chicken meat off bones, discarding bones and skin, and place in a food processor. Add beef and pork; pulse until finely minced but not pasty, 12 to 16 times. Transfer meat mixture to a medium bowl. Add 1¼ cups Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, salt, and nutmeg. Stir together until very well incorporated; taste for seasoning, and adjust if needed. (The filling should be highly seasoned.) Stir in egg. Cover and chill until ready to fill tortellini, up to 6 hours.

3. Make the tortellini: Mound flour on a wooden board, and make a well in center. Crack eggs into well, and add olive oil. Using a fork, beat together eggs and olive oil, and slowly incorporate flour into egg mixture until a dough forms. Using your hands, bring dough together, kneading until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Wrap dough tightly in plastic wrap, and set aside to rest at room temperature 1 hour or up to 3 hours.

4. Unwrap dough, and divide into 4 portions. Working with 1 dough portion at a time (keeping other portions covered with a towel), flatten dough to ½ inch thickness. Using a pasta machine set to widest setting, roll flattened dough through machine. Fold dough in half crosswise, and reroll through pasta machine. Continue folding and rerolling dough until it is at least 4 inches wide, 1 or 2 more times. Once appropriate width is reached, continue rerolling dough through pasta machine, reducing width of rollers 1 setting at a time, until dough has been rolled through setting 0 (narrowest setting), sprinkling dough with flour as needed to prevent sticking.

5. Cut 1 dough sheet into about 28 (2-inch) squares. Place ¼ teaspoon filling in center of each square; brush edges of pasta lightly with water. Fold dough in half over filling, forming a triangle shape. Gently press out all of the air around filling. Bring up 2 corners of the triangle so that they meet at the bottom; press points to seal together, making a traditional tortellini shape. Place shaped tortellini in a single layer on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. (Keep tortellini covered with damp paper towels as you make them.) Repeat with remaining dough sheets and filling. Refrigerate until ready to cook.

6. Bring broth to a boil in a large saucepan over medium-high. Working in batches, add tortellini, and cook until tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Divide tortellini evenly among shallow bowls, and top each with ½ cup or more warm broth. Sprinkle bowls with remaining 1 cup Parmigiano-Reggiano, and serve immediately. —REBECCA WILCOMB, GIANNA, NEW ORLEANS

MAKE AHEAD Chill shaped tortellini up to 4 hours, or freeze in ziplock plastic freezer bags up to 1 month.

WINE Floral, medium-bodied Barbera d'Alba: 2017 Vietti Tre Vigne

Tomato-Braised Baccalà with Olives and Polenta

PHOTO P. 119

TOTAL 1 HR 45 MIN, PLUS 2 DAYS SOAKING
SERVES 6

Simmering soaked salt cod in a tomato sauce laced with peppers, onions, and olives infuses the fish with flavor and leaves it flaky and tender. Sweet and creamy polenta, enriched with lightly tangy mascarpone, sops up the sauce and balances the brightly flavored fish.

- 1 lb. baccalà (dried salted cod)**
- 6 cups water**
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt, divided**
- 1½ cups uncooked polenta**
- ½ cup mascarpone cheese**
- ¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided**
- 2 cups thinly sliced yellow onion**
- 2 Tbsp. sliced garlic**
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper**
- 1 cup dry white wine**
- 1 (28-oz.) can San Marzano tomatoes, undrained, crushed by hand**
- 2/3 cup pitted whole Gaeta or kalamata olives**
- ¼ tsp. dried oregano**
- ¼ tsp. black pepper**
- 2 fresh bay leaves**
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- Lemon wedges, for serving**

1. Place baccalà in a large bowl; add cold water to cover, and let soak in refrigerator 48 hours, changing cold water twice a day. Drain baccalà, and cut into 6 pieces (about 3 ounces each). Set aside.

2. Bring 6 cups water and 2½ teaspoons salt to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium-high. Gradually add polenta, whisking constantly. Return mixture to a boil, whisking constantly. Reduce heat to

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medium-low, and cook, uncovered, whisking occasionally, until polenta is tender and creamy, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Remove from heat, and whisk in mascarpone until smooth. Cover to keep warm until ready to serve.

3. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium. Add onion, garlic, and red pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and onion is translucent, about 6 minutes. Add wine, and cook, stirring occasionally, until mostly evaporated, 8 to 10 minutes. Add crushed tomatoes and their juices, olives, oregano, black pepper, bay leaves, and remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil. Cook, stirring often, until sauce is slightly thickened, about 8 minutes.

4. Add cod to tomato sauce, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until cod flakes easily when pressed with a fork, 16 to 20 minutes, flipping cod pieces after 10 minutes. Stir in remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt or more to taste. Remove and discard bay leaves. Serve cod and sauce over polenta. Sprinkle with parsley, and serve with lemon wedges. —REBECCA WILCOMB, GIANNA, NEW ORLEANS

WINE Crisp, earthy Pinot Nero: 2017 J. Hofstätter Meczan



Holiday Heroes

Pan-Roasted Lobster with Chive Beurre Blanc

PHOTO P. 109

TOTAL 1 HR 30 MIN; SERVES 4

Fresh Maine lobster bathed in white wine butter sauce makes for an elegant holiday meal, inspired by Jasper White's classic

New England preparation. Butchering live lobsters might seem intimidating; once you get the hang of handling them, the rest of the dish is easy. If live lobsters are unavailable, substitute eight thawed frozen Maine lobster tails, 3 pounds large head-on shrimp, or 2 pounds diver scallops simply seared and served with the sauce.

- 2** Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 4** (1½-lb.) live Maine lobsters
- 2** cups cold unsalted butter (16 oz.), cubed, divided
- 1** cup finely chopped shallots (about 6 shallots)
- 1** (750-ml.) bottle unoaked dry white wine (such as Muscadet)
- 1** tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1** tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 2** Tbsp. (1 oz.) high-proof bourbon (such as Old Grand-Dad 100 Proof) (optional)
- ½** lb. linguine or fettuccine, cooked according to pkg. directions
- ¼** cup minced fresh chives
- 2** to 4 Tbsp. water

1. Place a damp paper towel on a work surface near sink, and top with a large rimmed baking sheet. Place another damp paper towel inside baking sheet, and top with a large plastic cutting board. Have ready to use: a large, sharp chef's knife; 1 small bowl; and a second large rimmed baking sheet brushed with melted butter.

2. Working with 1 lobster at a time, place lobster, belly side up, on cutting board. Using your left hand, curl tail into body, and hold. Arrange claws facing right. Carefully plunge tip of knife through mouth of lobster, killing lobster instantly. (Although it may still move, the lobster is dead.) Continue cutting in a downward motion until edge of knife makes contact with cutting board, cutting head in half. Remove knife, turn lobster over, belly side down, and rotate lobster 180 degrees. Flatten tail on cutting board. Insert knife at point of first cut, and cut downward through carapace and tail, cutting lobster in half. If lobster is female, it will have dark green roe where the body meets the tail. Remove 1 tablespoon roe, and place in a small bowl; discard remaining roe. Set bowl aside. Discard light green tomalley, vein running through tail, and head sac. Cut crosswise between tail and carapace to separate.

3. Remove claws and knuckles by twisting from body. Grip claw with a kitchen towel, and crack claws between spikes with back of knife, twisting knife left and right to crack shell. Arrange lobster tail halves,

cut sides down, and claws on buttered baking sheet. Repeat procedure with remaining lobsters. Chill lobsters in refrigerator until ready to cook, up to 2 hours. (If desired, use poultry shears to cut off legs, and place in a steamer basket over simmering water. Steam 4 minutes, and serve as an appetizer.)

4. Preheat oven to 450°F. Melt 2 tablespoons cubed butter in a large saucepan over medium. Add shallots, and cook, stirring often, until shallots are translucent, 4 to 6 minutes. Stir in wine, and bring to a rapid boil over high. Reduce heat to medium-high, adjusting heat as necessary to maintain a vigorous simmer; cook until wine is reduced to just below top of shallots, 30 to 35 minutes. Reduce heat to low, and cook, whisking in remaining cubed butter, a few cubes at a time, until sauce is creamy and thickened.

Remove from heat; stir in lemon juice and salt, and cover. Set beurre blanc in a warm spot until ready to use, up to 30 minutes.

5. Transfer lobsters to preheated oven, and roast 5 minutes. Carefully remove from oven, and use tongs to flip lobster tails cut sides up. Return to oven, and roast until lobster shells are bright red and meat is opaque and plump, 3 to 5 minutes. Working quickly, transfer baking sheet to stovetop. If desired, drizzle lobsters with bourbon, and carefully ignite the vapor with a long match or long multipurpose lighter. Let stand until flames disappear. Line a warmed platter with hot cooked linguine; using tongs, place lobsters on pasta. Tent platter with aluminum foil.

6. Pour liquid drippings from baking sheet into a large skillet over medium; discard white albumen on baking sheet. Add reserved roe to skillet, and cook, whisking constantly, until roe begins to turn bright red and is the texture of soft scrambled eggs, about 30 seconds. Remove skillet from heat, and whisk in beurre blanc and chives. If sauce is very thick, whisk in water, 1 tablespoon at a time, to reach desired consistency. Season with salt to taste. Remove and discard foil from lobsters, and pour beurre blanc over lobsters and pasta. Serve immediately.

—MARY-FRANCES HECK

MAKE AHEAD Lobster may be butchered up to 2 hours before cooking. Keep chilled in refrigerator.

WINE Racy, citrusy Albariño: 2018 Eighty Four Wines Napa Valley Carneros

NOTE Frozen raw Maine lobster tails are available from Luke's Lobster in the freezer section of Whole Foods.

Red Wine Venison Stew

PHOTO P. 108

ACTIVE 1 HR 50 MIN; TOTAL 4 HR
SERVES 8

Made with venison, this stew is intensely flavored and has a silky, thick sauce that clings to the vegetables and meat as they slowly cook together. Beef chuck roast works very well here, too, but may add more fat, so be sure to skim the final stew before serving.

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper, plus more to taste
- 1 (4-lb.) boneless venison or chuck roast, trimmed and cut into 2-inch cubes
- 7 to 8 Tbsp. bacon drippings (from about 1 lb. thick-cut bacon, cooked) or vegetable oil, divided
- 8 thyme sprigs
- 4 whole cloves, crushed
- 8 juniper berries, crushed
- 3 bay leaves
- 3 (2-inch) lemon peel strips plus 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (from 2 lemons), divided
- 3 medium-size yellow onions, large diced (about 5 cups)
- 4 medium carrots, peeled and large diced (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 10 oz. sliced fresh cremini mushrooms (about 3 1/2 cups)
- 4 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 (28-oz.) can whole peeled plum tomatoes, crushed
- 4 cups beef bone broth (such as Brodo)
- 1 1/2 cups full-bodied, robust red wine (such as Cabernet Sauvignon or Syrah)

Cooked egg noodles
Chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley and sour cream, for serving

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Toss together flour, salt, and pepper in a large bowl; add venison, and toss to coat.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons bacon drippings in a large Dutch oven over medium. Working in 4 batches, add venison, and cook, turning occasionally, until well browned, about 15 minutes per batch. Transfer venison to a plate. Add more bacon drippings, 1 tablespoon at a time, between batches as needed. (If necessary, deglaze the Dutch oven with water [save this water and return to pan when adding broth], and wipe clean. Then start next batch with 2 tablespoons bacon drippings.)

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3. Place thyme, cloves, juniper berries, bay leaves, and lemon peel strips in a double layer of cheesecloth. Gather edges of cheesecloth; tie securely with kitchen twine, and set aside.

4. Add onions, carrots, mushrooms, garlic, and remaining 2 tablespoons bacon drippings to Dutch oven. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are softened, about 15 minutes. Add tomatoes, broth, cheesecloth bundle, lemon juice, and browned venison along with any drippings accumulated on plate. Return to a simmer over medium-high; transfer to preheated oven. Braise, uncovered, until venison is fork-tender, about 2 hours, stirring in wine after 1 hour.

5. Return Dutch oven to stovetop, and bring to a simmer over medium. Reduce heat to low, and gently simmer until sauce has thickened slightly, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat, and skim and discard fat from surface of stew. Remove and discard cheesecloth bundle. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve over egg noodles with parsley and sour cream.

—RAY ISLE

MAKE AHEAD Stew can be made ahead and stored in an airtight container in refrigerator up to 2 days. Reheat gently before serving.

WINE Powerful, spicy Petite Sirah: 2017 Ridge Vineyards Lytton Estate

NOTE Venison is available from dartagnan.com.

Steak-and-Shrimp Hot Pot

PHOTO P. 112

TOTAL 45 MIN; SERVES 8

Cooking tender rib eye, fresh mushrooms, and sweet shrimp tableside makes for an interactive holiday meal. The broth, already seasoned and spiced with fresh aromatics, oils, and sauces, deepens in flavor as you cook vegetables; meats; and, eventually, noodles throughout the night. Keep the broth at a simmer to safely cook each ingredient.

Hot Pot Broth (recipe follows)

- 1 lb. baby bok choy (about 7 heads), cut into small pieces
- 2 fresh enoki mushroom bunches (about 8 oz.), trimmed and cut into small bundles
- 1 lb. daikon, peeled and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick half-moons (about 3 cups)
- 1 (14-oz.) pkg. firm tofu, drained, halved lengthwise, and cut crosswise into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick slices
- 1 lb. peeled and deveined tail-on raw medium shrimp
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. sea scallops, sliced crosswise

1 (1½-lb., 1½-inch-thick) rib eye steak, frozen until firm and thinly sliced crosswise with a sharp chef's knife

Hot Pot Dipping Sauce
(recipe p. 128)

3 (6-oz.) pkg. frozen steamed dumplings (such as Bibigo Pork & Vegetable Steamed Dumplings) (about 16 dumplings)

2 lb. uncooked refrigerated udon noodles

1. Place broth in a one-compartment electric shabu-shabu hot pot (or a shallow stockpot). Place hot pot in center of dinner table, and heat according to manufacturer's instructions (or place stockpot on a hot plate in center of table). Bring broth to a gentle simmer in pot; maintain during cooking. (Do not overcrowd the ingredients. This will help maintain a simmer.) Place vegetables, tofu, seafood, and steak on serving trays on dinner table.

2. Using chopsticks, small hot pot strainers, and small tongs, dip, cook, and eat items in batches; serve with dipping sauce. Cook bok choy and mushrooms until crisp-tender, 1 to 2 minutes; cook daikon pieces until crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes; cook tofu until just warmed through, about 30 seconds; cook shrimp and scallops until just cooked through and opaque, 2 to 3 minutes; cook steak to desired degree of doneness. When all the meat and vegetables have been eaten, add dumplings to broth, and cook according to package directions. Remove dumplings, and add noodles to broth. Cook noodles according to package directions. (The noodles will absorb and help thicken the broth.) Divide noodles and dumplings among bowls. Ladle thickened broth into bowls. —NICK WONG

MAKE AHEAD Vegetables can be prepped and refrigerated up to 1 day in advance.

WINE Bright, spicy red: 2017 Fratelli Alessandria Speziale Verduno Pelaverga

Hot Pot Broth

PHOTO P. 113

TOTAL 50 MIN; MAKES 8 CUPS

Infusing chicken stock with fresh herbs and aromatics, as well as classic condiments like hot chile-sesame oil and chile bean sauce, quickly adds layers of flavor. Keep the additional salt light—the broth will become saltier as you cook ingredients in it.

- 2 Tbsp. sesame oil
- 2 Tbsp. Chiu Chow-style chile oil (such as Lee Kum Kee) or hot chile-sesame oil



- 9 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 (3-inch) piece fresh ginger, thinly sliced (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
- 1 (5-oz.) bunch scallions, quartered
- 6 whole star anise
- 3 black cardamom pods
- 2 Tbsp. tobani djan or chile bean sauce (such as Lee Kum Kee)
- 3 qt. best-quality lower-sodium chicken broth (such as Imagine)
- 2 Tbsp. soy sauce, plus more to taste

1. Heat sesame oil and chile oil in a large saucepan over medium; add garlic, ginger, and scallions. Cook, stirring often, until scallion mixture is wilted and ginger is caramelized in spots, 5 to 7 minutes. Add star anise and cardamom; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add chile bean sauce, and stir to coat. Add chicken broth, and bring to a boil over high.

2. Reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring and scraping bottom of pan occasionally, until broth is spicy, aromatic, and has a slight smokiness from the cardamom, about 20 minutes. Strain broth; discard solids. Stir in soy sauce, adding more to taste. —NICK WONG

MAKE AHEAD Broth can be made 2 days in advance, or frozen up to 3 months.

NOTE Chile oil, black cardamom, and tobani djan can be found at your local Asian grocery store.

Hot Pot Dipping Sauce

PHOTO P. 112

TOTAL 15 MIN; SERVES 8

Using pasteurized eggs makes this dipping sauce safe to eat raw and thickens the sauce to a luxurious consistency.

- 3 large pasteurized eggs
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sliced scallions
- 6 Tbsp. hoisin sauce
- 6 Tbsp. seasoned rice wine vinegar
- 3 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 3 Tbsp. satay sauce (such as Lee Kum Kee)
- 3 Tbsp. sriracha
- 1 Tbsp. grated peeled fresh ginger
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped garlic
- 1 Tbsp. sesame oil

Whisk together eggs in a medium bowl until thoroughly blended. Whisk in scallions, hoisin sauce, rice wine vinegar, soy sauce, satay sauce, sriracha, ginger, garlic, and sesame oil until well combined. —NICK WONG



Forever Cookies

Gluten-Free Cacao Nib Meringues

PHOTO P. 117

ACTIVE 25 MIN; TOTAL 1 HR 10 MIN

MAKES 18

Made with chocolate, cacao, and cocoa, these intensely flavored meringues have a delicate, crispy exterior with a soft, chewy, marshmallow-like interior.

- 4 large egg whites
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 oz. bittersweet baking chocolate, chopped (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
- 2 Tbsp. cacao nibs, plus more for sprinkling
- 1 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa

1. Preheat oven to 300°F with oven rack in lower third of oven. Combine egg whites and sugar in bowl of a heavy-duty stand mixer. Bring 1½ inches of water to a simmer in a small saucepan over medium. Place bowl with egg white mixture over simmering water, ensuring base of bowl does not touch water. Cook, whisking constantly, until sugar is dissolved, 6 to 8 minutes.

2. Transfer bowl with egg white mixture to stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment. Beat on medium-low speed, gradually increasing speed to high, until mixture is very thick, fluffy, and reaches room temperature, 6 to 8 minutes. (Mixture will resemble marshmallow fluff.) Using a rubber spatula, fold in chocolate, cacao nibs, and cocoa until incorporated.

3. Using a 1¾-inch scoop, drop small mounds (about 2 tablespoons each) onto

2 parchment paper-lined baking sheets, leaving 2 inches between mounds. Sprinkle mounds with cacao nibs. Bake in preheated oven until exteriors of meringues are dry and cookies can be lifted off of paper without sticking, 18 to 22 minutes, rotating baking sheets halfway through baking time. Let meringues cool completely on baking sheets, about 20 minutes. Store in an airtight container up to 1 week. —CHARLIE TROTTER

MAKE AHEAD These cookies are best eaten the same day, but they will keep in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week.

Chocolate Chunk Mandel Bread

PHOTO P. 116

ACTIVE 30 MIN; TOTAL 2 HR 15 MIN

MAKES 28

Softer and less crunchy than a classic biscotti-style cookie, mandel bread gets its texture from pockets of melted coarsely chopped chocolate studded throughout the slices. Use a long serrated knife for slicing, and wipe the blade clean between slices to prevent the chocolate from smearing.

- 3½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour (about 13½ oz.)
- 1 cup almond flour (about 3½ oz.)
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- ¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1½ cups granulated sugar, divided
- 4 tsp. ground cinnamon, divided
- ¼ cup fresh orange juice
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 8 oz. bittersweet baking chocolate, coarsely chopped (about 1½ cups)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Stir together unbleached all-purpose flour, almond flour, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl; set aside. Place eggs, oil, brown sugar, 1 cup granulated sugar, and 1 tablespoon cinnamon in bowl of a heavy-duty stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Beat on medium speed until combined, about 2 minutes. Stir in orange juice and vanilla extract.

2. With mixer running on low speed, gradually add flour mixture, beating until just combined. Stir in chocolate. (At this point, the dough should be stiff enough to loosely shape—not as stiff as cookie dough, but not as loose as cake batter.)





Spoon dough out at a diagonal (corner to corner) onto a parchment paper-lined rimmed baking sheet. Using wet hands, shape dough into a 14- x 7-inch loaf. (Loaf will spread considerably while baking; center on baking sheet as much as possible.)

3. Bake in preheated oven until loaf is lightly browned and set, 24 to 26 minutes. Let loaf cool on baking sheet 5 minutes. Using a serrated knife, cut loaf crosswise into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick slices. Transfer slices, cut sides down, to 2 parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Bake slices at 350°F until golden brown, 12 to 14 minutes.

4. Stir together remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar and remaining 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Sprinkle about $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon-sugar over each hot mandel bread slice. Transfer slices to a wire rack, and let cool completely, about 1 hour. —MOLLIE KABO

MAKE AHEAD Mandel bread can be stored in an airtight container up to 5 days.

Triple Chocolate-Peppermint Cookies

PHOTO P. 115

ACTIVE 45 MIN; TOTAL 2 HR, PLUS 4 HR CHILLING; MAKES 24

The peppermint bark in these cookies from Big Fat Cookies in Chicago is simple to make and adds a festive pop of color and flavor in each cookie, though store-bought bark will work well here, too.

PEPPERMINT BARK

- 5 **peppermint candy canes (about 2½ oz.)**
- 15 **red and white peppermint chocolate kisses (such as Hershey's Kisses) (about 2½ oz.)**
- 3 **(4-oz.) white chocolate baking bars, chopped**
- Pink food coloring gel**

COOKIES

- 5 **cups unbleached all-purpose flour (about 21¼ oz.)**
- ½ **cup red Dutch-process unsweetened cocoa (such as Guittard Cocoa Rouge)**
- ½ **cup Dutch-process cocoa blend (such as Hershey's Special Dark)**
- ½ **cup crushed chocolate wafer cookies (2 oz.)**
- 2 **tsp. baking powder**
- 1½ **tsp. kosher salt**
- 2 **cups unsalted butter (16 oz.), chilled and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces**
- 3 **cups granulated sugar**
- 4 **oz. semisweet chocolate chips, melted and cooled**
- 4 **large eggs**



1 (12-oz.) pkg. semisweet chocolate chips

1. Make the peppermint bark: Pulse candy canes and chocolate kisses in a food processor until finely chopped, 10 to 14 times. Set aside. Bring 1 inch of water to a simmer in a medium saucepan over medium. Place chopped white chocolate in a medium heatproof bowl, and place over simmering water, ensuring base of bowl does not touch water. Heat, stirring often, until chocolate is melted and smooth, about 6 minutes.

2. Remove from heat; stir in candy cane mixture and 1 drop of food coloring gel until incorporated. Pour chocolate mixture onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet; spread into a 12- x 10-inch rectangle. Freeze, uncovered, until firm and set, about 2 hours. Break or cut bark into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces. Store in an airtight container in freezer until ready to use, up to 1 week.

3. Make the cookies: Stir together flour, red Dutch-process cocoa, cocoa blend, crushed wafer cookies, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl; set aside.

4. Add butter and sugar to bowl of a heavy-duty stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Beat on medium speed until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add melted semisweet chocolate, and beat until combined. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating until well combined after each addition. With mixer running on low speed, gradually add flour mixture, beating until just incorporated. Stir in chocolate chips. Wrap dough tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate at least 4 hours or up to 3 days.

5. Preheat oven to 375°F. Using your hands, roll dough into 24 balls (about 3 ounces each). Place 6 dough balls 2 inches apart on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet (keeping remaining dough balls chilled). Bake in preheated oven until cookies are set but still soft, 12 to 16 minutes. Remove from oven, and immediately top cookies with 6 to 8 peppermint bark pieces, slightly inserting edges of bark into warm cookies to hold in place. Let cookies cool on baking sheet 5 minutes. Serve warm, or transfer to a cooling rack to let cool completely, about 30 minutes. Repeat with remaining cookie dough balls and peppermint bark. —LINDA LEVINSON FRIEND

MAKE AHEAD Peppermint bark may be frozen for up to 1 week. Freeze any remaining dough balls for up to 6 months in an airtight container, or freeze baked cookies in an airtight container and reheat in a 350°F oven for 5 minutes.

AT MY TABLE

Lemon-Tahini Cookies

PHOTO P. 132

ACTIVE 30 MIN; TOTAL 2 HR 30 MIN
MAKES ABOUT 30 COOKIES

For the crispiest cookies, be sure to chill the dough; it helps reduce spreading during baking and concentrates the flavor by allowing the dough to dry slightly.

- ¾ **cup unsalted butter (6 oz.), softened**
- ¾ **cup granulated sugar**
- ½ **cup well-stirred smooth tahini**
- 1 **large egg**
- 3 **Tbsp. lemon zest plus 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice**
- 1 **tsp. vanilla extract**
- 2 **cups all-purpose flour (about 8½ oz.)**
- 1 **tsp. kosher salt**
- ½ **cup cacao nibs (optional)**
- ¼ **cup black sesame seeds**
- ¼ **cup white sesame seeds**

1. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Beat butter, sugar, and tahini in a medium bowl with a hand mixer on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 5 minutes. Add egg, lemon zest and juice, and vanilla; beat until combined, about 1 minute, scraping down sides of bowl as needed. With mixer running on low speed, gradually add flour and salt; beat until dough comes together. If using, fold in cacao nibs until combined.

2. Divide dough in half; place each half on a large piece of plastic wrap. Fold plastic wrap over to cover dough, and, using your hands, roll each into a smooth log 1 inch in diameter. Refrigerate until firm, at least 1 hour and 30 minutes or up to 8 hours.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine sesame seeds on a small sheet pan or flat plate. Remove dough logs from plastic wrap, and roll in sesame seeds, pressing firmly so seeds adhere evenly. Slice dough logs into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick rounds. Place 1 inch apart on prepared baking sheets.

4. Bake cookies in preheated oven until golden around edges, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on baking sheets 5 minutes; transfer to a wire rack, and let cool completely, about 15 minutes. Store in an airtight container at room temperature up to 5 days. —GAIL SIMMONS

MAKE AHEAD Dough can be made and frozen up to 3 weeks ahead. Let thaw 30 minutes before rolling in sesame seeds.



Lemon-Tahini Cookies
(recipe p. 130)

Sweets to Savor



GAIL SIMMONS

LAST WINTER, I HAD the good fortune of spending a week traversing the cities, deserts, ports, and verdant fields of Israel in the company of 20-plus fellow food-obsessed chefs and food writers; culinary heavyweights Jonathan Waxman, Ruth Reichl, Jenn Louis, Nancy Silverton, and Marc Murphy were among them. We were on a spiritual pilgrimage of a new kind: to uncover and understand what is arguably the most complex convergence of food cultures in the world. Together we visited farms, home and restaurant kitchens, morning markets, wineries, food incubators, renowned dining rooms, and late-night food stalls. We were eager to taste and to learn how a land so fraught by ages of conflict (yet still so new in its independent history) can preserve its ancient foodways with such passion and purpose.

We were a ravenous bunch, consuming, questioning, and squealing with glee at every flavorful find. In fact, our discoveries felt so plentiful that after a while I lost count, even with the pages of notes and flurry of photos I took each day. Despite our feeding frenzy, there were several distinct moments of clarity and revelation, when I tasted something so utterly satisfying that it is now and forever burned into my sense memory. One such instance took place at the Carmel Market in Tel Aviv, known to the locals as Shuk HaCarmel. We spent the morning guided

through stalls and stands by author Adeena Sussman, whose new Israeli cookbook *Sababa* was inspired by the vendors and foods of the market. Toward the end of the tour we stopped at a beautiful display of molds for halvah, the dense sweet that in the Middle East is often made of pressed sesame paste (tahini) and sugar then swirled or sprinkled with anything from dark chocolate to nuts to rose oil. The shopkeeper placed a piece of his favorite in my hand, and as soon as it dissolved in my mouth I knew it would be my favorite, too.

Bright, tart lemon zest (not juice) added the most fragrant, floral note to the otherwise dense, earthy dessert. Dark, just-bitter cacao nibs balanced out what otherwise would have been a cloying sweetness. It was a masterful combination, one I knew I needed to bring back to my kitchen.

Of course I bought a large slab and have been nibbling on it ever since (Pro tip: Halvah will keep, well wrapped, in a cool, dark spot in your pantry for over a year!). In addition, the trinity of lemon zest, tahini, and cacao nibs has been making its way into my sweets and baking repertoire ever since, from morning pancakes to the perfect ice cream topping—and these unassuming, irresistible Lemon-Tahini Cookies (recipe p. 130). They may just be the ideal holiday gift for everyone on your list this year, no matter your culture or creed. After all, deliciousness knows no bounds.